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BIBLICAL HISTORY

FAMILIARIZED BY QUESTIONS.

BY

ANN A. TOWNSEND.

"

"And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."—DEUT. vi. 7.

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P R E F A C E .

THIS book has been compiled with the view to supply a want often expressed to the writer, by young mothers and instructors of children, and with the desire to infuse and strengthen in the youthful mind a love for the Truth.

The Scriptures bear an invaluable testimony to the infinite mercy and goodness of God, in His gracious dealings with the children of men; and an acquaintance with them is often a source of comfort and encouragement to the young as well as the old.

The opinion which is now generally received by scientific men, that the creation of the world must have embraced a much greater period than six of our days, has not been alluded to in the history. A geological explanation has been left to the discretion of parents and teachers.

Hugh Miller, in his admirable work entitled "The Testimony of the Rocks," remarks, that "The days of the Mosaic creation may be regarded, without doing violence to the genius of the Hebrew language, as successive periods of great extent."

It was impracticable, in so small a volume, to notice all the interesting events recorded of the prominent characters which have been reviewed; therefore the history of the Israelites, after the death of Moses, except as casually mentioned in the life of David, has been omitted.

For the same reason, the various feasts, offerings, and sacrifices, instituted by the Jewish lawgiver, have not been enumerated.

Should this volume answer the purpose intended, it may be followed by a similar one, embracing parts of the New Testament.

A. A. T.

INTRODUCTION.

“THE BIBLE” is the appellation given to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

“Bible” is a Greek word which signifies *book*. The word “Testament” means *will*; but as used in reference to the sacred writings, it implies covenant, compact, or agreement. The “Old Testament” denotes the Books containing the records of the dispensations of Jehovah to his people, under the Mosaic or Jewish law. The New Covenant, or “Testament,” contains the record of the Christian dispensation as introduced by the coming of the promised Messiah, in which “old things were to be done away, and all things to become new.”

It is not certainly known at what time, or by whom, these terms were first used to designate the two divisions of the Scriptures.

The order of the English Bible is taken from the Greek Septuagint. The Books originally were not divided into chapters

and verses. These divisions, though of comparative recent origin, have not, in many instances, been made judiciously,—the sense being often interrupted by the close of a chapter, and still oftener by a break in the verses. Imperfect as the arrangement is, it seems necessary to retain it, on account of the convenience of reference.

The first English translation of the Bible was made about the year 1290, but by whom is unknown.

About the year 1380, John Wickliffe translated the entire Bible into English, from the Latin. Before the invention of printing, the great labor and expense of transcribing books prevented an extensive circulation of the Scriptures, but the translation of Wickliffe is said to have produced a great effect upon the public mind. It was considered so dangerous to the Romish religion, that there was an effort made to suppress it, by introducing a bill into the House of Lords for that purpose.

The bill was rejected; after which Wickliffe published a more correct translation.

At an assemblage held at Oxford, in the year 1408, it was made a punishable offence for any one to “translate any text of Scripture into English, by way of a book, or a

little book or tract, and that no book of this kind should be read that was composed in the time of John Wickliffe, or since his death." This led to great persecution;—many persons were punished severely, and some suffered death for reading the Bible in English.

The first printed translation was by William Tindal. So great was the opposition to this work, that the bishop of London endeavored to buy up the whole of the editions as fast as they were printed, in order to burn them.

The first complete English Bible was translated and printed in folio, by Miles Coverdale, in the year 1535. This was the first translation allowed by royal authority. Several editions and translations were made in succeeding years, with various degrees of correctness, but in 1611 the one now in common use was authorized by James I., king of England. He selected a company of fifty-four men, eminent for their piety and distinguished for their knowledge of the original languages; but before they commenced the work, seven of them had either died or declined engaging in it, so that it was accomplished by forty-seven. It is said that the labor occupied between four and five years.

It contains phrases which modern critics have shown do not express exactly the original meaning; but as a whole, it stands unrivalled. A modern writer says: "More than two hundred years have elapsed since this translation, and yet the simple and majestic purity and power of the English tongue is expressed as clearly as when it was given to the world. It has become the standard of our language, and nowhere can the purity and expressive dignity of this language be so fully found as in the Scriptures."—"Succeeding ages may correct some of its few unimportant errors—may throw light upon some of its obscure passages,—but it must stand, wherever the English language is spoken, as the purest specimen of its power to give utterance to the meaning of ancient tongues, and of the simple and pure majesty of the language we speak."

The Bible is regarded as the highest outward authority by the Christian community.

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Biblical History.

CHAPTER I.

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD—ADAM AND EVE—CAIN AND ABEL—NOAH—THE DELUGE—TOWER OF BABEL.

Question. What is said respecting the origin of the Scriptures?

Answer. That holy men of old wrote as they were inspired.

Q. Is all that is found in the Bible supposed to have been written by inspiration?

A. "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and in writing or compiling the historical parts of the Bible, wisdom was furnished to render the narrative instructive.

Q. Do you know why the first book of the Old Testament is called Genesis?

A. Genesis means Creation, and the Book of Genesis, as its name implies, gives an account of the creation of the world and of man.

Q. Of what else does it tell us?

A. It describes the disobedience of our first parents, and tells us of the flood, and of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob down to Joseph.

Q. Is this Book considered particularly valuable by the Jews?

A. They look upon it with veneration, as giving a history of their venerable founder Abraham and his near descendants, around whom many of their peculiar customs and laws were intertwined.

Q. In what other particular is it valuable?

A. Besides subjects for moral and religious reflection, it furnishes rich material for historical, genealogical, and antiquarian investigations.

Q. What does the Bible say of the creation of the world?

A. That God created the heavens and the earth, and that at first the earth was without form and void, and darkness covered the face of the great deep.

Q. How was the darkness removed?

A. The spirit of God moved upon the waters, and he said, Let there be light, and there was light.

Q. What was the light called?

A. The light was called day, and the darkness was called night.

Q. What portion of time was called a day?

A. The morning and the evening were called a day.

Q. In what way were the waters divided?

A. It is written, God made the firmament and divided the waters.

Q. What was the firmament called?

A. It was called Heaven.

Q. How was the firmament illuminated?

A. By two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. Stars were also made to give light to the earth.

Q. Do you remember the beautiful language of the Psalmist in reference to the heavens?

A. "When I consider thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visiteth him."

Q. What was the earth to produce?

A. Grass and herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed within itself.

Q. Anything else?

A. Cattle, beasts, birds and many creeping things which now inhabit the earth.

Q. After the waters were gathered, what were they called?

A. They were called seas, and were to bring forth an abundance of fishes, and many other living creatures.

Q. How many days are said to have been occupied in the creation of the world?

A. Six days, and on the seventh it is written God rested from his labor.

Q. Of what is this account of the creation, the labor and rest, typical?

A. The whole may be applied to man's spiritual condition.

Q. In what way? Can you give an illustration?

A. There is a state which may justly be compared to the earth without form; with darkness covering the whole earth.

Q. Is this darkness to be dispelled by human effort?

A. No; but by patiently waiting for the great creative power to move as upon the face of the waters, the same command will be given, Let there be light, and there will be light.

Q. We see that the figure *may* be applied throughout; but give your idea of the labor and rest.

A. Man is to labor diligently, day by day, for the perfection of his spiritual creation, and when it is accomplished, he will perceive

that it is good; and the peace which is the result of this labor may justly be compared to the Sabbath, or day of rest.

Q. What was said of the creation after its formation?

A. God saw everything that He had made, and pronounced it very good.

Q. Did He cause rain to fall upon the earth at once?

A. No; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

Q. What now was regarded as essential for the completion of the design of the creation?

A. The formation of man. There being no one to till the ground, the Lord formed man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul.

Q. What was the name given to man?

A. Adam, which signifies, earthy—taken out of red earth.

Q. Where was Adam placed?

A. In the garden of Eden.

Q. What does Eden imply?

A. The word denotes pleasure or delight, and is applied to a place remarkable for beauty or fertility.

Q. What was there peculiar about the garden of Eden?

A. A river went out of it, and parted into four streams.

Q. What at the present time is said about its locality?

A. The attempt to establish the locality of the garden is attended with great difficulty.

Q. What commandment was given Adam when he was placed in Eden?

A. Of every tree of the garden he might freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he should not eat.

Q. What was the penalty attached to disobeying this commandment?

A. If he ate thereof, he should surely die.

Q. What kind of death was alluded to?

A. Not the death of the body;—but through disobedience he would be separated from that divine life or harmony which is essential for the health of the spirit, whereby he would witness a spiritual death; for, “to be carnally-minded is death.”

Q. What did Adam seem to require to complete his happiness in the beautiful spot in which he had been placed?

A. The Lord said, it was not good for man to be alone; and he created woman to be an help-meet for him.

Q. What was the name of the woman, and what did Adam call her?

A. Her name was Eve, and Adam called her his wife.

Q. What does Eve signify?

A. A living, or enlivening.

Q. In what responsible position was Adam placed?

A. He was to give names to the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and to every living and creeping thing; and he was given dominion over them.

Q. What great sorrow befel Adam and Eve?

A. They partook of the forbidden fruit, and witnessed the spiritual death of which they had been forewarned.

Q. What tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit?

A. It is written, that the serpent tempted the woman, and she shared it with her husband.

Q. What disposition in the mind does this figure represent?

A. Selfishness or self-will.

Q. What was the effect of their disobedience?

A. They were unhappy; and when they heard the voice of the Lord they were afraid.

Q. Do you know anything about this feeling?

A. Yes; to do wrong, or disobey the will of our heavenly Father, always occasions unhappiness and suffering.

Q. What became of Adam and Eve after they transgressed the divine law?

A. They were driven from Paradise; and it was said they should earn their living, or bread, by tilling the ground, or by destroying the thorns and thistles that would spring up.

Q. Do you know what these thorns and thistles are intended to represent?

A. Yes; the improper thoughts and desires that would choke the good seed sown in the heart, and prevent its growth.

Q. What was placed at the east end of the garden?

A. A flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Q. What does the flaming sword imply?

A. The good spirit which is given to every one, to guard him from evil and guide him in the right way.

Q. What do we read of Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve?

A. Cain was a tiller of the ground, and Abel a keeper of sheep.

Q. What are we told of their offerings?

A. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof.

Q. Is there anything more said of their offerings?

A. The Lord had respect unto Abel's offering, and had not respect unto Cain's.

Q. Why had the Lord greater respect unto Abel's offering than Cain's?

A. Abel was a righteous man and trusted in God, and therefore by *faith* offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain.

Q. Did this offend Cain?

A. Cain's countenance fell, and he was very angry.

Q. What was said to Cain?

A. Why art thou wroth? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted, and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.

Q. Had this the effect upon Cain it should have had?

A. No; Cain, while talking to his brother, slew him.

Q. What answer did Cain give, when queried with about his brother?

A. He replied, Am I my brother's keeper?

Q. What was the condemnation for this cruel act?

A. The ground which he tilled should not give forth its strength, and he should be a fugitive upon the face of the earth.

Q. How did Cain meet this sentence?

A. He said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from Thy face shall I be hid. I shall be a fugitive and vagabond, and those who find me shall slay me."

Q. In what way was Cain's life to be preserved?

A. A mark was set upon him lest any finding him should kill him; and it was said, whosoever slew Cain should suffer sevenfold.

Q. Where did Cain live after he slew his brother?

A. In the land of Nod, situated a little east of Eden; and it is said he built the city of Enoch there.

Q. What does the word Nod signify?

A. Wandering, exile, wilderness, or the wilds, — descriptive of a guilty state of mind.

Q. What was Adam's age when he died?

A. Nine hundred and thirty years.

Q. Who is said to be the oldest man who ever lived?

A. Methuselah, who lived 969 years.

Q. Who was the father of Methuselah?

A. Enoch.

Q. For what was Enoch noted?

A. Enoch walked with God.

Q. Why did the flood come upon the earth?

A. The wickedness of man was great in the earth, and the thoughts of his heart were evil continually.

Q. Who was warned of the impending deluge?

A. Noah was told that the earth would be destroyed, and that he should make an ark of gopher wood, in which he and his family might be saved.

Q. Do you know what kind of wood gopher wood is?

A. The Greek name of cypress bears a resemblance to gopher, and by some it is believed to be the same tree.

Q. Was this kind of wood common to the country?

A. It abounded in Assyria and was valued for its durability and freedom from worms; it was used for ship-building, and was almost the only wood that could furnish timber for so large a vessel.

Q. Was only Noah's family to be saved?

A. It is recorded that "God said that

everything that is in the earth should die; but with Noah he should establish a covenant, and he should take his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives, and of every living thing there should be two of a sort, male and female, and they should go into the ark."

Q. Why were Noah and his family thus favored?

A. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He was a just and upright man.

Q. What were the names of the sons of Noah?

A. Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Q. Did Noah act in accordance with what had been shown him?

A. He built the ark as he was commanded; and he and his family, with the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, and the creeping things of the earth, two of every kind entered it.

Q. How long did it rain upon the earth?

A. Forty days and forty nights.

Q. How long did the waters prevail?

A. One hundred and fifty days.

Q. By what means did Noah discover that the waters had abated?

A. He opened a window of the ark, and sent forth a dove.

Q. Did the dove return to the ark?

A. Finding no rest for the sole of her foot, she returned to the ark.

Q. Did he send her forth again?

A. In seven days he again sent her forth, and in the evening she returned with an olive-leaf in her mouth, and Noah knew by this that the waters had abated.

Q. What was the name of the mountain upon which the ark rested?

A. Ararat—the height of which is said to be fifteen thousand feet.

Q. What do modern travellers say of this mountain?

A. That it may be distinguished at the distance of two hundred miles, and that it is covered with ice and snow.

Q. Have they succeeded in reaching its top?

A. It has been visited by many, but its summit has proved inaccessible. Years ago a large reward was offered by the Turkish governor of Beyazid to any one who should reach the top; but though many of the natives who lived at its foot made the attempt, they all failed.

Q. What was Noah's first act after he and his family left the ark?

A. He built an altar unto the Lord, and made an offering upon it.

Q. What was said of this offering?

A. The Lord smelled a sweet savor and said, I will not again curse the ground for man's sake, but while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.

Q. What further evidence was furnished of the goodness and mercy of the Universal Father?

A. As a token of the covenant made with Noah that there should no more be a flood to destroy man, he would bring a cloud over the earth, and a *bow* should be seen in the cloud.

Q. How long did Noah live after the flood, and at what age did he die?

A. Noah lived 350 years after the deluge, and all his days are recorded as 950 years.

Q. Was the whole earth of one speech at this time?

A. It was, until the people attempted to build a tower on a plain in the land of Shinar.

Q. What was the object of this tower?

A. They said, Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make a name, lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.

Q. Did they accomplish this?

A. No ; their language became confused, and they were scattered over the whole earth ; and they left off to build the city.

Q. What was this city or tower called ?

A. It was called Babel, because of the confusion of tongues.

Q. Where was this building begun ?

A. It is supposed, on the spot or in the immediate neighborhood where the city of Babylon afterwards stood, that is, on the Euphrates.

Q. Were Noah or his sons concerned in building the tower ?

A. It is not likely ; but it is probable they opposed it, as the builders had “ withdrawn themselves, and chose a place at some distance from the seat of Noah and the patriarchs.”

CHAPTER II.

THE LAND OF CANAAN — ABRAHAM — LOT —
SODOM AND GOMORRAH — ISAAC — HAGAR
AND ISHMAEL — REBECCA.

Question. Frequent mention is made in Scripture of the land of Canaan. Do you know where it lies?

Answer. The land of Canaan originally laid east and south-east of the Mediterranean Sea; but the families of the Canaanites extended their settlements among the neighboring nations.

Q. What was the origin of its name?

A. It was called after Canaan, the son of Ham.

Q. To whom was it afterwards given as an inheritance?

A. To the children of Israel, or the seed of Abraham.

Q. Can you mention anything of especial interest in the life of Abram, when he was young, and before he was called Abraham?

A. He was commanded to leave his father's house, his kindred and country, and

go into a land that the Lord would show him.

Q. What was to be the result of his obedience to this command?

A. The promise was, that he should be blessed, and that his name should be made great, and that in him should all the families of the earth be blessed.

Q. In what manner should the families of the earth be blessed through Abram?

A. Abram believed in the Lord, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness; and by his faithfulness others should be influenced to walk in obedience to the divine will.

Q. What was the Apostle Paul's testimony in relation to it?

A. Paul said: They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham, and those that are of faith are *blessed* with faithful Abraham.

Q. Whom did Abram take with him when he left his kindred and country?

A. His wife Sarah, and Lot, his brother's son.

Q. Did they amass wealth?

A. Yes. Abram possessed cattle, silver and gold; and Lot also had flocks, and herds and tents.

Q. What was the consequence of these riches?

A. The land was not able to produce food for them all, for their substance was great, and there was a strife between their herdsmen.

Q. What did Abram say to Lot about this trouble?

A. Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we are brethren.

Q. How did he propose the difficulty should be settled?

A. That they should separate. He gave his nephew his choice. If Lot should go to the left hand, Abram would take the right; but if he would depart to the right hand, Abram would take the left.

Q. What would such a proposition be calculated to teach?

A. To avoid strife and settle difficulties with an unselfish spirit.

Q. Where did Lot locate himself?

A. He chose all the plain of Jordan, because it was well watered everywhere.

Q. Now, what did Abram do?

A. The Scripture says, the Lord told Abram to look northward and southward and eastward and westward, and to arise and walk

through the land in its length and breadth, and it all should be given him and his seed forever.

Q. In what sense do you understand this promise to have been given?

A. "The promise was not to Abram or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."

Q. Then, where did Abram pitch his tent?

A. He came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and he built an altar there.

Q. Where is Hebron?

A. In the southern part of Canaan.

Q. We read of Hagar as connected with Abraham's family. Who was she?

A. Hagar was Abraham's bondwoman, and the mother of Ishmael.

Q. Was Hagar driven into the wilderness?

A. The record says, that she was found by an angel of the Lord, at a fountain of water in the wilderness, who inquired why she was there.

Q. Did Hagar answer him truthfully?

A. She replied, she had fled from her mistress.

Q. What was she advised to do?

A. To return and submit to the hand of

her mistress; and she was told that Ishmael should become a mighty nation.

Q. Was Hagar comforted by the presence of the messenger?

A. She recognized the goodness and mercy of her heavenly Father, and said, "Thou, God, seest me."

Q. What was the well called at which this circumstance took place?

A. It was called Beer-la-hai-roi, which being interpreted, is, "The well of Him that liveth and seeth me."

Q. As Abraham sat in his tent-door on the plain of Mamre, whom did he see coming towards him?

A. Three men, and he ran to meet them, and bowed himself toward the ground, and asked them to turn in and rest themselves under a tree.

Q. Did Abraham have a meal prepared for them?

A. Abram had water brought to wash their feet, and told his wife to make ready quickly three measures of meal and knead and bake it on the hearth.

Q. Did they not have loaves of bread as we have?

A. No; in that country bread would not keep good except for a short time; and it was

a universal custom to grind flour and bake it every day.

Q. Grind flour every day?

A. Yes; grain was ground in a handmill, which was an indispensable article in every house.

Q. What was the construction of this mill?

A. It was made of two circular stones placed horizontally one upon another; and the upper being made to revolve upon the lower, reduced to flour the corn which was introduced through a hole in the topmost stone. There was a wooden handle fastened above by which to turn it.

Q. Who used the mill?

A. It was the business of maid-servants, and it was considered a degrading employment for a man, or for a woman of rank.

Q. Could one person turn the mill?

A. One could do it; but it was usual to have two, to make the work lighter.

Q. How was the bread baked?

A. In various ways; but a common plan was to bake cakes on the hearth or in the ashes, though iron pans or plates were sometimes used and placed over the fire.

Q. Did Abram furnish his guests with anything beside bread?

A. While Sarah made the cakes, Abram

caught a young and tender calf and had a young man to dress it; beside the meat and bread he placed butter and milk before them, and they ate their meal under the tree.

Q. What appeared to be the object of their visit to Abram?

A. They gave a promise to Abram of a son, and he was also shown that Sodom would be destroyed.

Q. Did the men remain long with Abram?

A. After they had concluded their meal, and delivered their message, they arose and went toward Sodom.

Q. Did Abram accompany them?

A. He went part way with them, but returned after he heard the fate of Sodom.

Q. Why was Abram made acquainted with what should befall that city?

A. It is written that the destruction of Sodom was shown Abraham, because he would become a great and mighty nation; and that the Lord knew him, that he would command his children and his household after him.

Q. What was Abram's query when he heard that city was to be destroyed?

A. Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? and queried, if there were fifty righteous to be found, would not the place be spared? For,

said he, far be it from Thee that the righteous shall be as the wicked. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Q. What was the reply?

A. He was answered that if there were fifty righteous found in the city, that it should be spared for their sakes.

Q. Did Abram make a further appeal?

A. He said, Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes; but if there lack five of the fifty, wilt Thou destroy it for the lack of the five? And the promise was that it should not be destroyed.

Q. Was Abraham still disposed to plead for Sodom?

A. He continued his request not only if there were thirty, but if there were twenty found, and then if there were ten.

Q. Was he promised that if ten were found there, that the city should be saved for the sake of the ten?

A. This was the assurance Abraham received; after which he returned to his own house.

Q. Was Lot sojourning at Sodom at this time?

A. Lot was still there, and we learn by the record that two angels or messengers,

for in that day the messengers of the Lord were often called angels, came to Lot in the evening, and he bowed himself to the ground.

Q. Did he invite these messengers to tarry all night with him?

A. Lot said, I pray you my lords, turn into your servant's house, and wash your feet and tarry all night, and you shall rise up early and go on your way.

Q. Did they lodge with Lot?

A. They said Nay, but we will abide in the street all night; but as Lot pressed them greatly, they entered his house, and he made them a "feast."

Q. A feast in accordance with the modern idea?

A. We may presume it was a simple meal that Lot provided for his friends; we are told that unleavened bread was baked, and they did eat.

Q. What was the errand of these messengers?

A. It would seem that it was to preserve Lot and his family. They bade them flee from Sodom, that they might not be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

Q. Did they go as they were directed?

A. Lot called his sons-in-law, but they would not hear; and while he lingered he

was bidden to make haste, and take his wife and daughters with him.

Q. What command was given Lot as they departed?

A. "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

Q. What favor did Lot ask?

A. That he might not go to the mountain lest evil should befall him, but that he might flee to a city, a "little one," that his soul might live.

Q. Was his request granted? And what was the city called?

A. Yes; Lot was permitted to enter the city, and it was called Zoar, which signifies little or small.

Q. Was Sodom destroyed?

A. It is said, that the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire, and the cities were overthrown and the inhabitants were destroyed.

Q. What happened to Lot's wife?

A. She looked back in her flight and became a pillar of salt.

Q. Did Abraham witness the destruction of Sodom?

A. Abraham went to the place where he stood in the morning before the Lord, and

looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and the smoke of the country was as the smoke of a furnace.

Q. Did Abraham change his residence about this time?

A. He went to the south country and sojourned in Gerar, an ancient town of the Philistines, not far from Gaza.

Q. Is this city mentioned by modern historians?

A. Gerar is not noticed in late histories.

Q. Was this the birth-place of Isaac, the son of promise?

A. It appears to have been, as there is no account of Abraham's having again removed before his birth.

Q. Why were the Patriarchs so roving in their habits?

A. They were nearly all shepherds or the keeper of sheep and cattle, and dwelt in tents, which they removed as the pasturage for their flocks required; it being an easy matter, as the grass failed in one place, to move to another still fresh with the wild abundance of nature.

Q. Are they not spoken of as being rich in gold and silver, as well as in flocks?

A. Some of them are; such as Abraham and Isaac, and also Jacob with all his sons, who

were not only wealthy in worldly substance, but were surrounded by several hundred servants.

Q. What is meant by the term Patriarch?

A. It means the father or a ruler of a family who governs by paternal right.

Q. Was it the usual form of government at that time?

A. The first form of government that was instituted was patriarchal,—the authority of parents being recognized by their children after they were grown, and even after they had formed new families of their own.

Q. Was the Patriarch looked upon with special reverence?

A. His descendants were taught to look upon him as their head, both religious and civil.

Q. In case of the death of a Patriarch, what was done?

A. When the father died, each son became the proper ruler of that branch of the general family which was descended from himself.

Q. What was the title given such?

A. Such an one was called a prince, a ruler. He had power to make war or treaties of peace with states and tribes around him, by his own sovereign authority.

Q. What family trouble is recorded as oc-

cunning at a feast which was given on Isaac's account, while he was yet young?

A. Sarah saw Ishmael, Hagar's son, mocking, and she called to Abraham and said, Cast out this bond-woman and her son, for her son shall not be heir with my son.

Q. Was this a trial to Abraham?

A. It was very grievous to him; but he was assured that it was better to do as Sarah requested, and that Ishmael would be remembered.

Q. Did Abraham provide for Hagar and Ishmael?

A. He arose early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it to Hagar, and she departed and wandered into the wilderness of Beersheba.

Q. Was the bottle here mentioned like the glass bottles now in use?

A. No; the bottles used in that day were made of goat-skin.

Q. How were they made?

A. By stripping off the skin of a goat or kid from the neck downward without ripping it, and cutting off the legs and tail.

Q. Which was the mouth of the vessel?

A. The hole left by one of the fore-legs answered the purpose of a spout, while the rest were tightly sewed up.

Q. How was it filled?

A. It was filled by the neck, which was afterward tied like the mouth of a sack.

Q. Did the water keep good and fresh in this kind of a bottle?

A. It is said that water, milk, or wine, will keep better in this than in any other kind of vessel.

Q. Are they used for other purposes?

A. Almost every kind of provisions is carried in them.

Q. Are such bottles in use now?

A. The Arabs still use them, and sometimes form a vessel nearly as large as a hogs-head out of an ox-skin. Two of this size filled with water and slung over the back of a camel, are of great value to a company travelling through the desert.

Q. Was Hagar likely to perish in the wilderness?

A. After the water was gone, she threw her child under a shrub, and went a good way off, that she might not see him die, and she sat down and wept.

Q. What is recorded as happening to Hagar at this juncture?

A. It is written, God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said, What aileth thee?

Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad from whence he is.

Q. What was she bidden to do?

A. To arise and lift up the lad and hold him in her hand, for He would make him a great nation.

Q. What did she now discover near her?

A. She opened her eyes and beheld a well of water, and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink.

Q. Did Hagar and Ishmael continue in the wilderness?

A. They dwelt there, and Ishmael grew and became an archer.

Q. Of whom was Ishmael the ancestor?

A. He was the ancestor of the Ishmaelites, from whom are descended the modern Arabs of the desert, or Bedouins.

Q. How old was Abram when his name was changed to Abraham?

A. Abram was ninety-nine years old when the Lord appeared unto him and said, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect; he was also told he should no longer be called Abram, but Abraham.

Q. What difference is there in the signification of these two names?

A. Abram signifies an high father, the father of elevation; and Abraham, the father of a great multitude.

Q. What trial of Abraham's faith occurred not very long after this period ?

A. He felt himself called upon to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac.

Q. Was there an especial reason for this being a test of his faith ?

A. Yes ; Isaac was the child of his old age and the heir of promise.

Q. Upon what mount did Abraham make the altar preparatory to the sacrifice of Isaac ?

A. Upon mount Moriah, a three days' journey from his home. He prepared the wood and laid it upon Isaac, while he took the fire and the knife.

Q. What did Isaac say to his father as they were ascending the mountain ?

A. My father, behold the fire and the wood ! but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering ?

Q. What was the reply ?

A. My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering.

Q. After binding his son to the altar, and Abraham had stretched forth his hand to slay his son, what did he hear ?

A. " Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

Q. We thought that Abraham had other sons ; why is Isaac called an *only* son ?

A. We are informed that the word *only* was used sometimes to express excellence—superiority—and in that sense we suppose it was applied to Isaac as the heir of promise. The term “first-born” was also used in the same way by the ancients.

Q. As Abraham lifted up his eyes, what did he see and do ?

A. He saw a ram caught in the thicket by his horns ; and he took the ram and offered him as a burnt-offering, instead of his son.

Q. What further evidence of approbation did Abraham receive for his faithfulness ?

A. It was said to him, Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Q. What important lesson is taught by this history so full of trust and resignation to the divine will ?

A. That a blessing ever attends a faithful adherence to what we believe to be right, even though it may call for the sacrifice, or

giving up, of that which is as dear to us as an only son.

Q. How old was Sarah, Abraham's wife, when she died? and where was she buried?

A. Sarah was one hundred and twenty-seven years old. She was buried in a sepulchre which Abraham bought of the sons of Heth for a burying-place, in the field of Machpelah.

Q. Did Abraham marry again after the death of Sarah?

A. He married Keturah, and they had a family of six sons.

Q. In what way did Abraham, in his old age, manifest his concern for the welfare of Isaac?

A. He called the eldest servant of his house, and charged him to go into the country of his own kindred, and bring his son a wife from thence.

Q. Had the servant doubts as to the success of the undertaking?

A. He had; but he was assured by Abraham that an angel would be sent before him.

Q. In what way did he manifest a faith similar to that of Abraham?

A. By making his camels kneel down by the well at which the maidens of the city of Nahor came to draw water, and asking that

good speed might attend him, and that kindness might be shown unto his master Abraham.

Q. What sign did he ask should be given as to which of the maidens should be the wife of Isaac?

A. He said, Let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I say let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give the camels drink also; let the same be she, and thereby I shall know that thou hast shown kindness to my master.

Q. Was this request granted?

A. We read that Rebecca the daughter of Bethuel came with her pitcher upon her shoulder, and when the servant ran to meet her and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher, she said, Drink, my lord, and she hastily let down her pitcher, and when she had finished giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also.

Q. Does the custom of drawing water from wells still continue in the East?

A. The custom of drawing water in pitchers still prevails in the East:—an earthen vessel with two handles being used for the purpose.

Q. What did the servant say upon having his wish so admirably granted?

A. The man held his peace, and wondered if the Lord had made his journey prosperous.

Q. What further is said of Rebecca?

A. She is represented as having been very fair.

Q. What reply did she make when asked if there was room in her father's house to lodge the strangers?

A. She said, We have both straw and provender enough, and a room to lodge in.

Q. What acknowledgment of gratitude did the servant then make?

A. He bowed his head and worshipped, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth; and I being *in the way*, he led me to the house of my master's brethren.

Q. After she had received presents from the stranger, what did Rebecca do?

A. The damsel ran and told them of her mother's house all that had happened, and Laban her brother went out to meet the man at the well.

Q. Did he invite him into the house?

A. After he saw the presents which his sister had received, and heard from the ser-

vant that Abraham had sent him, he entertained him with great hospitality.

Q. Among the rites of hospitality of that day, can you name one which was considered especially important?

A. To provide water to wash the traveller's feet.

Q. Why was it more necessary then, than now?

A. At that time the feet of travellers were not protected as we see them. We are told the common covering of the foot was a sandal, but persons often went barefoot.

Q. How did the servant make known his errand?

A. As he sat at meat, he rehearsed the particulars of his mission,—how Abraham had been blessed and become great, and that he had sent him to bring a wife for his son from among his own kindred.

Q. Did he allude to his own fears that “the woman” would not follow him?

A. Yes. He spoke of his own doubts, and also of his master's assurance that the Lord would prosper him; he further told them of the sign that he had prayed should be given respecting the damsel, and how wonderfully his prayer had been granted.

Q. What effect had this narration upon the father and brother of Rebecca?

A. They answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord. Behold, Rebecca is before thee; take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

Q. How did the stranger manifest his appreciation of the favors which he received?

A. He worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth.

Q. What proofs of friendship did he now proffer Rebecca?

A. He brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebecca, and also gave to her mother and brother precious things.

Q. Did Rebecca go at once with the stranger?

A. Her mother and brother would have deferred her departure for ten days; but the man when he arose in the morning, said, send me away to my master.

Q. How did they settle the matter?

A. They said, We will call for the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

Q. What was her reply?

A. When queried with, if she would go with the man, she replied, I will go.

Q. Who went with her?

A. Rebecca's family gave her their blessing, and sent her nurse with her.

Q. How did Isaac receive her?

A. Isaac had gone into the field at eventide to meditate, and he lifted up his eyes, and behold the camels were coming. When Rebecca saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel, and veiled herself according to the custom of that day. The servant told Isaac all that happened, and he brought Rebecca into his mother's tent, and she became his wife, and he loved her.

Q. What is there in this history from which we may derive instruction?

A. We discover that Abraham's faith in divine guidance was shared by his servant, whose heart was filled with gratitude, as he was made to prosper in his mission. That Rebecca and her family being satisfied that "the thing proceeded from the Lord," yielded in simplicity, and that the divine favor rested upon all.

Q. What do we read of Abraham's latter days?

A. That he lived an hundred threescore and fifteen years; that he died in a good old age, and was gathered to his people, and was buried by his sons Isaac and Ishmael in the same sepulchre with Sarah his wife. Thus ended the life of the venerable patriarch.

CHAPTER III.

ESAU AND JACOB — LABAN — LEAH AND RACHEL — JACOB'S RETURN — DEATH OF RACHEL — JOSEPH.

Question. Had Isaac and Rebecca any children?

Answer. They had two sons, Esau and Jacob.

Q. What is said of the boys?

A. The boys grew. Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.

Q. We often hear allusion made to Esau's selling his birthright for a mess of pottage; what can you tell about it?

A. Esau came from the field weary and faint, and asked Jacob for some pottage.

Q. Did his brother give it to him?

A. Jacob said, This day sell me thy birthright.

Q. What did he mean by this request?

A. In that day the eldest born had privileges which the younger children did not enjoy; as at the present time, under mo-

narchical governments, the eldest son is heir to the kingdom.

Q. Were not Esau and Jacob twins?

A. They were; but Esau was the first born; therefore Jacob said unto him, sell me this day thy birthright.

Q. What was Esau's answer?

A. Esau felt weary and faint and thought he was going to die, and concluded his birthright was of very little value; so he sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage.

Q. Can you tell of what this dish, so highly prized by Esau, consisted?

A. Pottage is said to be made of meat boiled soft, with some vegetables, or sweet herbs; but the pottage that Jacob gave Esau was made of bread and lentils.

Q. What are lentils?

A. They are a kind of bean, which grow abundantly in Egypt, and are much used for food. Lentils are dressed in the same manner as beans, and dissolve easily, making a pottage of chocolate color.

Q. Why is the circumstance of Esau's selling his birthright so frequently referred to, in spiritual instruction?

A. It is a forcible illustration of the consequences of parting with our birthright to an heavenly inheritance for earthly gratifica-

tions, which perish with the using, and give us no permanent happiness.

Q. What do you mean by a birthright to an heavenly inheritance?

A. In a spiritual sense, man is created in the image of God, and designed by Him to inherit His kingdom, which is his spiritual birthright.

Q. Was Jacob a favorite with his mother?

A. He was; and through her means Jacob obtained the blessing which his father had designed for Esau.

Q. What did this deception lead to?

A. To hatred and revenge; and as Esau threatened the life of Jacob, the latter was persuaded by his mother to leave his father's house.

Q. After leaving his home, what befel Jacob on his way to Padan-aram?

A. He came to a certain place and tarried there all night;—he made his pillow of stones, and laid down to sleep.

Q. "His pillow of stones." Is there teaching in this circumstance?

A. Yes. Through deception Jacob had grieved his father, and sorely offended his brother; and, to save his life, had left his father's house. He had thereby formed, as it were, a pillow of stones upon which to

lay his head in the night season ; which may be compared to a quiet hour suited to reflection.

Q. What is said of Jacob's dream on this occasion ?

A. He thought he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels were ascending and descending on it.

Q. What else did he think he saw ?

A. He thought he beheld the Lord standing above it, and He told Jacob that He was with him, and would not leave him, but would go with him wherever he went.

Q. Is there a lesson of spiritual import contained in this vision ?

A. We may justly suppose that the mind of Jacob had, before going to sleep, been turned toward his heavenly Father, in a repentant condition.

Q. Would that be likely to occasion such a dream ?

A. We may infer that the cry of penitence had been heard by the good Spirit, and that heavenly influences were hovering around Jacob even in his sleep ; and that this created the instructive vision of the angels that were ascending and descending the ladder.

Q. To what may the angels be compared ?

A. To holy thoughts and desires which emanate from the divine spirit.

Q. What does the ladder represent?

A. The ladder may be compared to acts of obedience, each act being as a rung of the ladder, leading step by step from earth to heaven.

Q. There is another part you have not alluded to. Jacob thought he saw the Lord standing above the ladder, and he talked with him; what does this signify?

A. That Jacob felt that the Lord was near, and that he was remembered in mercy, and that forgiveness was granted him in the covenant made with him.

Q. What did Jacob do when he awoke?

A. Jacob said, Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. He took the stones which had been his pillow, and made a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it.

Q. How might this act be spiritually interpreted?

A. The dispositions which had formed for Jacob a hard and stony pillow were collected and placed together as a pillar, which was overspread with the love of God, that is not unfrequently spoken of as the anointing oil.

Q. What did Jacob call this place?

A. The place was named by Jacob, Bethel the house of God.

Q. Was this name afterwards transferred to another spot?

A. A city eight or ten miles north of Jerusalem was afterwards called by that name, and has since been looked upon as the real Bethel.

Q. What was the covenant or "vow" of Jacob at this time?

A. That if the Lord would be with him, to keep him in the way that he should go, and would give him bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that he could come again in peace to his father's house, then should the Lord be his God.

Q. In which direction did Jacob pursue his journey?

A. Towards the East, where he found a well in the field with three flocks of sheep lying by it.

Q. For what was this well especially used?

A. For watering the flocks of the neighborhood.

Q. Whom did Jacob meet at the well?

A. Men from Haran, who knew Laban, the uncle of Jacob.

Q. Did Jacob question them concerning Laban?

A. Yes; and they told him that Rachel,

Laban's daughter, was coming with her sheep.

Q. What did Jacob do when Rachel came to the well?

A. Jacob drew near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered her flocks.

Q. What liberty did he take with Rachel as a kinsman?

A. He "kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept."

Q. What did she do when Jacob told her he was Rebecca's son?

A. She ran and told her father.

Q. How did Laban receive Jacob?

A. "When he heard the tidings he ran to meet him and embraced and kissed him; and brought him to his house, saying, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh."

Q. How long did Jacob continue a guest in his uncle's house?

A. He had been there a month, when his uncle told him, he must not serve him for naught, and asked what his wages should be.

Q. What was Jacob's reply?

A. Jacob loved Rachel, Laban's youngest daughter, and told her father he would serve him seven years for her.

Q. What answer did Laban give Jacob?

A. That it was better she should marry him than that she should be given to another, and that Jacob should abide with him.

Q. Did Jacob serve Laban cheerfully for seven years?

A. Yes; and he said it seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had for Rachel.

Q. At the end of the seven years, did Jacob marry Rachel?

A. No; his uncle insisted upon Jacob's taking Leah, an older sister, under the pretext that in their country it was not seemly for a younger sister to wed before an older one.

Q. Did Jacob consent?

A. He did, with the understanding that he was to serve seven years longer for Rachel.

Q. But how could Jacob have *two* wives?

A. In the days of the Patriarchs it was not considered sinful to have more than one wife, but with the enlightenment of Christianity, polygamy is looked upon as a great crime.

Q. What did Jacob and Rachel call their oldest son?

A. Joseph.

Q. Did Jacob continue with Laban after the birth of Joseph?

A. After Joseph was born, Jacob said to

Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.

Q. How long had Jacob been with his father-in-law?

A. Twenty years.

Q. What did Laban say to the proposition?

A. He was not willing to part with his son-in-law, for he said he knew from experience that he had been blessed for the sake of Jacob; and Laban asked Jacob what he should give him.

Q. What reply did Jacob make?

A. He made certain propositions to Laban respecting the future increase of his flocks, of which Jacob should have a share, to which Laban assented.

Q. Did Jacob remain as one of Laban's family?

A. No; he removed three days' journey from Laban, but continued as his herdman.

Q. Did Jacob increase in outward substance?

A. He "increased exceedingly and had many cattle."

Q. What seems to have induced him to again think of returning to his native place?

A. He found the sons of Laban were becoming jealous of him, and that his father-

in-law looked upon him with less favor than formerly.

Q. What promise was made to Jacob in his trouble?

A. The record says that the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee.

Q. What may be inferred from this promise?

A. That Jacob kept the covenant made by him at Bethel, and that he was favored with divine guidance in the way in which he should go.

Q. Did Jacob consult with his wives about it?

A. He called Leah and Rachel from the field and laid his heart open before them; he told them they knew he had served their father with all his power, and although his wages had been changed ten times, yet God had not suffered him to be hurt.

Q. In what manner did his wives receive this?

A. They answered, "Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do."

Q. Did Jacob acquaint his father-in-law with his intentions?

A. No; he left while Laban was absent shearing his sheep.

Q. What did Laban do when he discovered Jacob and his family had gone?

A. On the third day after Jacob left, it was told Laban, and he took his brethren and pursued them a seven days' journey.

Q. Had Laban a dream before starting?

A. We read that "God came to Laban, the Syrian, in a dream by night and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."

Q. What shall we understand by this dream?

A. That Laban should be prudent and careful what he said to Jacob.

Q. Where did Laban overtake Jacob?

A. Jacob had pitched his tent in Mount Gilead; Laban and his brethren pitched theirs there also.

Q. What reason did Jacob give his father-in-law, when he asked, why he left secretly?

A. He said, Because I was afraid that thou might take by force thy daughters from me.

Q. What did Laban search for among the goods of Jacob?

A. For his household gods, or idols.

Q. What were these household gods?

A. We cannot answer as to Laban's, but we may be instructed by an individual application of the fact spiritually.

Q. In what way?

A. If we believe it to be wrong that *idols* should be kept in any household, we have need to search our own hearts that none may be secreted there.

Q. In what way could we secrete idols in our hearts?

A. An idol is *anything* which usurps the place of the great I AM, in the hearts of his rational family, or upon which our affections are unduly placed.

Q. Can you remember a caution of an inspired writer on this subject?

A. John, called the divine, said, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Q. What did Jacob say should be the penalty, if the household gods were found?

A. Jacob knew not that Rachel had taken them, and said, With whom they are found, let him not live.

Q. Where did Rachel secrete them?

A. Among the camel's furniture, and she sat upon them.

Q. Did her father discover them?

A. No; he searched but did not find them.

Q. Did it displease Jacob that he was judged of taking that which did not belong to him?

A. He was much displeased, and recounted

to Laban his twenty years service, and how the Lord had prospered him, although Laban had dealt hardly by him.

Q. How did the interview end?

A. Laban proposed that a covenant should be made between Jacob and himself.

Q. For what was this covenant designed?

A. As a witness that harmony was restored, and that they should no more trespass one upon another, but that they should exercise righteous judgment.

Q. How was this covenant sealed?

A. By making an altar and sacrificing upon it.

Q. Did Laban and his friends tarry all night?

A. They remained till morning, when Laban kissed and blessed his children, and they departed.

Q. Did Jacob continue his journey?

A. Jacob went on his way attended by feelings of a heavenly nature, and he sent messengers to inform his brother Esau that he was coming.

Q. What word did these men bring when they returned?

A. That Esau was coming to meet Jacob with four hundred men.

Q. How did Jacob feel when he heard this?

A. He was greatly afraid and distressed, fearing his brother retained his enmity toward him.

Q. What did he do in this strait?

A. Jacob divided the people who were with him, and his flocks, his herds and camels, into two bands, so that if Esau captured one band, the other might escape.

Q. Where did Jacob look for deliverance?

A. He made a touching appeal to the God of his fathers, and said, I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies and of all the truth which Thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, for I fear lest he will smite me and the mother with the children.

Q. What course did Jacob pursue to appease his brother?

A. He separated a handsome present from his possessions, and sent them to Esau by his servants.

Q. How did he dispose of his family?

A. He sent his two wives, the two women-servants, and eleven sons, across the brook Jabbok.

Q. What happened to Jacob after he was left alone?

A. It is stated that he wrestled with a man till the break of day, and prevailed not; and when the day broke, the man said, Let me go, for the day breaketh.

Q. Did Jacob let him go?

A. Jacob answered and said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me.

Q. Did he receive the blessing?

A. Yes. He was asked his name, and when he said Jacob, the man replied, thou shalt no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and thou hast prevailed.

Q. What do you suppose was the reason for changing Jacob's name?

A. The name Jacob implies, he that supplants, or undermines, — and Jacob having atoned for the indiscretions of his youth, and become a righteous and powerful man, he should now be called Israel, which signifies a prince with God, or one that wrestles, and prevails.

Q. Did Jacob ask the name of him with whom he struggled?

A. He did; and was answered, Wherefore dost thou ask after my name? And Jacob was then blessed.

Q. What instruction may be drawn from

the account of Jacob's wrestling with the man?

A. We are sometimes left alone *spiritually*; and in order to obtain the divine blessing, it is necessary that we should wrestle with whatever stands in the way of our receiving it.

Q. What does the breaking of the day signify?

A. We must patiently struggle through the night, or until the breaking of the day, by which we understand, until the *light* breaks in upon the spirit, and through this medium we receive the blessing.

Q. What did Jacob name the spot made memorable by the occurrence above related?

A. He called it Peniel; for, said he, "I have seen God face to face, and my life has been preserved."

Q. At Esau's approach, what precautions did Jacob take?

A. When he saw Esau coming with his four hundred men, he divided the children among the women, and placed the handmaids and their children first, Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

Q. Did Jacob go before his family?

A. He went before them, and bowed himself seven times, until he came near his brother.

Q. How did Esau meet his brother?

A. He ran to meet him—fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept.

Q. What did he ask respecting the women and children?

A. He asked who they were;—after he was told, they drew near and bowed themselves before Esau.

Q. Did Esau receive the presents sent him by his brother?

A. He declined them, saying he had enough, and would rather Jacob would keep them.

Q. Did Jacob consent to this?

A. He said, "Nay, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, receive my present, for I have seen thy face as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me." Being urged, Esau accepted it.

Q. What did Jacob mean when he said, I have seen thy face as though I had seen the face of God?

A. No doubt Jacob had expected to see depicted upon the countenance of Esau, the animosity and displeasure which his brother had felt toward him, when he fled from his father's house; and when instead of this, he was met with tenderness and affection, the joy and happiness which filled his heart was comparable to that which flowed from a com-

munion with his heavenly Father, so that he could say, "I have seen thy face as though I had seen the face of God."

Q. Did Jacob and Esau journey together?

A. No; Jacob proposed that Esau should go before, and he would lead on softly as the children and cattle were able.

Q. In what way did Esau show consideration for his brother?

A. By proposing to leave some of his people to accompany Jacob.

Q. Did Jacob accept this escort?

A. He felt he did not need it, and preferred ending his journey as he had begun.

Q. Did Jacob build a house not far from this place?

A. At Succoth, near the river Jordan, Jacob built a house and made booths for his cattle.

Q. At what other place did Jacob tarry for a short time?

A. He bought a parcel of ground near the city of Shechem. He did not remain long here, but passed on to Bethel, the spot where he first erected an altar in his flight from Esau.

Q. What did Jacob require of his family as they were setting out for Bethel?

A. That they should place in his hands all their strange gods, and all their earrings which were in their ears.

Q. What did Jacob do with them ?

A. He hid them under an oak near Shechem.

Q. After arriving at Bethel, what did Jacob do ?

A. He built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because there God appeared unto him when he fled from the face of his brother.

Q. Who was buried near this spot ?

A. Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, who came with her from her father's house. She was buried under an oak near Bethel.

Q. Was Jacob conscious of a renewed blessing at this time ?

A. The Scripture says, God appeared *again* unto him and blessed him, and told him that he should not be called Jacob any more, but that Israel should be his name ; that he should be fruitful and multiply, and that he should be the father of many nations.

Q. What was said to him of the land of his fathers ?

A. The land that had been given Abraham and Isaac was given to Israel.

Q. What occurred which occasioned Jacob great sorrow about this time ?

A. His beloved wife Rachel died after naming her infant Benoni, which being interpreted, means, the son of my sorrow ; but

Jacob called him Benjamin, the son of my right hand.

Q. Where was Rachel buried?

A. In the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

Q. How was her grave marked?

A. Jacob set a pillar upon it.

Q. Did Jacob see his father Isaac?

A. Yes; he came unto his father at Mamre.

Q. How old was Isaac when he died?

A. He was an hundred and fourscore years; and he was buried by his sons Esau and Jacob.

Q. Did another calamity befall Jacob, beside the death of Rachel, soon after he returned to Canaan?

A. His beloved son Joseph was sold into bondage by his brethren.

Q. What occasioned this unnatural act on the part of Joseph's brothers?

A. Their father loved Joseph more than all his children, which caused them to dislike him so much that they could not speak peaceably unto him.

Q. Is there another reason given for their envy?

A. Joseph had two significant dreams, which he told his father and his brethren.

Q. What were these dreams?

A. In the first, he and his brethren were binding sheaves in a field and his sheaf arose and stood upright, and their sheaves stood round about and made obeisance to his sheaf.

Q. And what was the second?

A. He beheld the sun and moon and stars, and they made obeisance unto him.

Q. What did his father say when Joseph repeated this dream unto him?

A. He rebuked him, and said, "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

Q. What effect had these dreams upon his father?

A. While they occasioned his brethren to hate him, his father observed the saying.

CHAPTER IV.

JOSEPH — PHARAOH'S DREAM — YEARS OF
PLENTY AND FAMINE — JOSEPH'S BRETHREN
— ISRAEL'S REMOVAL TO EGYPT.

Question. How old was Joseph at this time?

Answer. About seventeen years old; and he and Benjamin were the only sons of their mother Rachel.

Q. How could his brethren sell him without the knowledge of their father?

A. Joseph had been sent by Israel their father to see whether it was well with his brethren and their flocks.

Q. Did he find them at Shechem?

A. No; when he came, they were not there; and as he wandered in a field, he met a man who asked him what he sought?

Q. Could the stranger tell him where his brethren had gone?

A. He told him he had heard them say, Let us go to Dothan.

Q. Did Joseph follow after them?

A. Joseph went to Dothan, and when his brethren saw him coming, they were vexed

and said one to another, Behold the dreamer cometh!

Q. What did they propose to do?

A. They concluded to slay him and throw him into a pit, and say some evil beast had devoured him; And then, said they, we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Q. Why did they not execute this plan?

A. Reuben heard it and said, Let us not kill him; shed no blood, but throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness.

Q. Was it more merciful to consign him to a lingering death, than to have killed him at once?

A. It would seem not; but the sequel teaches that deliverance may come in an unexpected manner, and Reuben may have desired to release Joseph from his brethren.

Q. Well, what further came upon Joseph?

A. When Joseph reached his brethren, they stript off his coat of many colors, which had been given him by his father as a special gift, and threw him into an empty pit.

Q. What was the next act of these cruel brothers?

A. They sat down to eat bread; and while they were eating, a company of Ishmaelites, who had their camels loaded with spices, myrrh, and balm, and who were going from

Gilead to Egypt, came into view ; and they took Joseph from the pit and sold him to them.

Q. Which of the brothers proposed releasing Joseph from the pit and selling him to the Ishmaelites?

A. Judah, who no doubt was suffering under a sense of their wrong-doing, said, "What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood. Come sell him to the Ishmaelites and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh."

Q. How much did these hard-hearted men receive as the price of their brother?

A. The Ishmaelites gave twenty pieces of silver, and took Joseph and brought him into Egypt.

Q. What further act of duplicity did Joseph's brethren conceive?

A. They killed a kid and dipped Joseph's coat in the blood and then presented it to their father, saying, Know now, whether it be thy son's coat or no.

Q. Did the father recognize the coat?

A. He knew it and exclaimed, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

Q. What outward manifestation did Israel give of his grief?

A. He rent his clothes and put sackcloth

upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

Q. Did his children try to comfort him?

A. His sons and daughters all rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted, saying, I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.

Q. What did the Midianites or Ishmaelites (they being one people) do with Joseph after taking him to Egypt?

A. They sold him to Potiphar, who was an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

Q. Was Potiphar pleased with Joseph, and how did he treat him?

A. Joseph found grace in the eyes of his master, because he was a righteous man, and performed his duty faithfully; he therefore made him ruler over all that he had, and knew nothing of anything save the bread which he ate.

Q. Did Joseph receive proofs of divine approbation in the management of his affairs?

A. Yes. He was made to prosper in all that he did.

Q. Did this state of things continue?

A. No; false accusations were brought against Joseph, and he was cast into prison.

Q. Did Joseph feel himself shut out from

the presence of his heavenly Father while in prison?

A. "The Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison."

Q. In what way did the keeper of the prison manifest his confidence in Joseph?

A. By placing under his care all the prisoners, and giving him charge of all that was done in prison.

Q. What reason was given for this?

A. "Because the Lord was with Joseph, and that which he did was made to prosper."

Q. What occurred which brought Joseph more especially into notice while in prison?

A. Two of the officers of Pharaoh, his butler and baker, had offended him, and they were imprisoned, and placed in the same ward with Joseph, and the captain of the guard gave them in charge of Joseph.

Q. In what way did Joseph serve them?

A. He saw them one morning looking very sad, and asked them the cause; they replied, they had dreamed a dream, and there was no interpreter of it.

Q. What did Joseph say to this?

A. He said, Do not interpretations belong to God?—tell them to me, I pray you.

Q. Did they do so?

A. The chief butler told his dream, and Joseph interpreted it favorably, telling him it signified his restoration in three days to his former place in Pharaoh's house.

Q. What request did Joseph make of the chief butler when he should be again restored to his place?

A. He asked the butler when it should be well with him to remember him with kindness, for he had been stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and had done nothing that he should be put into the dungeon.

Q. Did the chief baker tell his dream to Joseph?

A. When he perceived that the interpretation of his fellow-prisoner's dream was favorable, he told his also.

Q. What was Joseph's interpretation of it?

A. That in three days Pharaoh would cause him to be hung upon a tree.

Q. Did these things come to pass as Joseph had predicted?

A. It came to pass in three days, which was Pharaoh's birth-day, that he made a feast to all his servants, and restored the butler unto his butlership, but he hanged the chief baker.

Q. Did the butler remember the request of Joseph when he was restored to favor?

A. He did not remember Joseph.

Q. In what way then was Joseph released from prison?

A. In "two full years" after this time Pharaoh had two dreams which troubled him, and he sent for all the wise men and the magicians of Egypt, but there were none who could interpret them.

Q. Did this circumstance remind the chief butler of his neglect?

A. Yes. He then thought of Joseph, and told Pharaoh of what had occurred when he was in prison, and how admirably Joseph's interpretations of his and the chief baker's dreams had been verified.

Q. Did this induce the king to send for Joseph?

A. He sent, and brought Joseph hastily out of the dungeon, and communicated his dreams unto him.

Q. What answer did Joseph give Pharaoh?

A. He said, "It is not in me. God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

Q. Can you tell what Joseph thought the dreams signified?

A. He interpreted the first dream as meaning, that there would be seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt;

and the second indicated a famine, which should consume the land.

Q. What reason did he give for Pharaoh's having two dreams?

A. Because the thing was established by God, and He would shortly bring it to pass.

Q. Did Joseph tell Pharaoh how he should prepare for these visitations?

A. He advised him to appoint officers over the country, and gather corn and food from one-fifth of the land, and store it away for the time of need.

Q. Did the king approve this plan?

A. He said, "Can we find such an one as this is,—a man in whom the spirit of God is?"

Q. What did he say to Joseph?

A. Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art; thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

Q. What mark of special regard did he give Joseph?

A. He took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; and made him to ride in the

second chariot which he had, and they cried before him, Bow the knee.

Q. With what additional power did he invest Joseph?

A. He said, I am Pharaoh, and without *thee* shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.

Q. Whom did he wish Joseph to marry?

A. Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On.

Q. What was the age of Joseph when he was made ruler over Egypt?

A. He was thirty years old.

Q. What did Joseph call his two sons?

A. The first-born he called Manasseh, and the second he called Ephraim.

Q. Did the prediction of the seven years of plenty come to pass?

A. Yes; and it is written Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, until he left numbering, for it was without number.

Q. Did the famine follow?

A. That came also; and there was dearth in all lands, but in the land of Egypt there was bread.

Q. What did Pharaoh say unto the people who "cried" to him for bread?

A. "Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do."

Q. How did Joseph receive them?

A. He opened all the store-houses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and all countries came into Egypt to buy corn, because the famine was sore in the land.

Q. Did Jacob and his family suffer from the famine?

A. They were in great need, and Jacob said to his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? I have heard there was corn in Egypt; get you down thither, and buy us from thence, that we may live and not die.

Q. What do you suppose caused them to look one upon another, instead of going at once to Egypt to buy corn when they were suffering?

A. It is reasonable to suppose they remembered that they had sold their brother to a company of men who were on their way to Egypt, and that they felt a reluctance to go to a place the very thought of which, was filled with unpleasant associations.

Q. Did they go?

A. Yes; ten of them went to purchase food.

Q. Why did they not all go?

A. Jacob sent not Benjamin Joseph's brother, "peradventure mischief might befall him."

Q. Did Joseph know his brethren?

A. Yes; when he saw them he knew them.

Q. When Joseph's brethren came before him, what posture did they assume?

A. They bowed down their faces to the earth.

Q. Would this circumstance be likely to remind Joseph of his dream, which so offended his brethren?

A. It seemed like a fulfilment of it.

Q. What was that dream?

A. He thought he and his brethren were binding sheaves in a field, and his sheaf arose and stood upright, and their sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to his sheaf.

Q. Joseph had another dream; do you remember it?

A. He dreamed that the sun, moon, and eleven stars made obeisance to him.

Q. How did Joseph receive his brethren?

A. He spake roughly unto them, and said "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come."

Q. What was their reply?

A. They said, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come; we are true men and no spies. Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.

Q. In what way did Joseph prove them?

A. He said, Hereby shall ye be proved: ye shall not go hence except your young brother come hither. And he cast them into prison for three days.

Q. Did they then go for Benjamin?

A. After the space of three days, Joseph said unto them, "This do and live, for I fear God; if ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in prison, and go ye and carry corn for the famine of your houses; and bring me your youngest brother, and ye shall not die."

Q. In what way did they express their feelings to each other, when they were on their way to bring Benjamin?

A. "They said one unto another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

Q. What remark did Reuben make?

A. Reuben said, "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child, and ye would not hear; therefore behold, also his blood is required."

Q. Did they suspect that he of whom they bought corn was their brother?

A. They had no idea of it; he spake to

them through an interpreter, and they did not know him.

Q. Could Joseph command his feelings as he stood before his brethren?

A. He was greatly moved, and turned from them and wept; he then returned and communed with them, and took Simeon, and bound him before them.

Q. Did Joseph give particular directions about filling their sacks?

A. He commanded them to be filled with corn, and that every man's money should be placed in his sack, and that provisions should be furnished them for their journey.

Q. Did any of them discover the money before getting home?

A. One of them opened his sack to give provender to his ass, and espied his money.

Q. Was he frightened when he saw it?

A. He told his brethren what he had found, and they were all afraid, and said one unto another, "What is this that God hath done unto us?"

Q. Why did they suppose that all their trouble was brought upon them by the Lord?

A. They knew, as they themselves had said, that they "were verily guilty concerning their brother," and felt they had incurred the displeasure of their Father in Heaven,

and might not yet have realized that wickedness ever brings its own punishment.

Q. Did they acquaint their father with all that had befallen them?

A. They told him all: how the man spoke roughly unto them, and accused them of being spies; and they told him they were true men and not spies; and that to prove they were true, he had required them to bring Benjamin to him.

Q. Upon emptying their sacks, what did they discover?

A. They found that not only one had his money restored, but that every man's money was in his sack.

Q. Were they pleased to find that they had been thus favored?

A. Great consternation prevailed, and their poor father exclaimed, "Me ye have bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me."

Q. What promise did they make to their father, if he would suffer Benjamin to go with them?

A. Reuben said, if he would allow him to go, he would certainly bring him back; and as proof of his sincerity, added, If I bring him not back, "slay my two sons."

Q. Did Jacob yield to their wishes?

A. He still refused, saying, His brother is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Q. Did they continue to importune their father?

A. It would seem not. After they had consumed the corn they had brought, and were again in want, their father urged them to go for more. They then said, If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy food; and if not, we will not go, for the man said, Unless your brother be with you, ye shall not see my face.

Q. Did their father chide them for telling the man that they had yet a brother?

A. Israel said, "Why did ye deal so ill with me, as to tell the man ye had yet a brother?"

Q. How did they answer this question?

A. They replied, "that the man asked them straitly of our state and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother?" and we told him accordingly, not knowing that he would say, bring your brother down.

Q. What proposition did Judah make concerning Benjamin?

A. He begged his father to send Benjamin with them, and he would be surety for him. If he would do so, they would at once go for food, that they and their little ones might live; and if he did not bring Benjamin back, the blame should rest with him forever.

Q. What did Israel say to this?

A. If it *must be so*, do this; carry a present to the man, take the best fruits in the land in your vessels, — a little balm, a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds, — take double the money in your sacks, and the money that you found in your sacks, lest it might have been an oversight, and take your brother, and arise and go to the man.

Q. Did Israel give evidence of deep feeling after having consented to let his youngest son go?

A. His language was, "God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

Q. What did Joseph say when he saw Benjamin with his brethren?

A. When Joseph saw Benjamin with his brethren, he told the ruler of his house to bring them home, and slay and make ready, for they were to dine with him.

Q. Did his brethren feel at ease when they were brought into Joseph's house?

A. They were afraid they were to be arraigned because of the money that they found in their sacks, and told the steward, as they entered the door, how much surprised they were to find it, and they had brought it with them.

Q. Did he quiet their fears?

A. The steward said to them, "Peace be to you—fear not—your God and the God of your fathers hath given you treasure; I had your money." And he brought Simeon in to them.

Q. What hospitalities did he offer them as they entered the house?

A. He furnished them with water to wash their feet, and gave their asses provender.

Q. When Joseph came in, what happened?

A. His brethren, when they heard they were to dine with him, had made ready their present; and when he came, they offered it, and bowed themselves to the earth before him.

Q. What did Joseph say to them?

A. He asked of their welfare, and said, Is your father well—the old man of whom you spake; is he yet alive?

Q. How did they answer him?

A. They answered, Our father, thy servant, is in good health. And they bowed down their heads and made obeisance.

Q. What notice did he take of Benjamin?

A. He asked, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee my son.

Q. Was Joseph affected by the presence of his brother?

A. He made haste, for his heart yearned towards his brother, and he sought a place to weep, and he entered into his chamber and wept there. After which, he washed his face, and refrained from weeping, and said, Set on bread.

Q. Did they all sit down at one table?

A. In accordance with the custom of Egypt, they placed the food of Joseph by itself, and the Egyptians who were with them ate by themselves; for it was considered an abomination for Egyptians to eat with Hebrews.

Q. How were Joseph's brethren arranged at table?

A. The first-born according to his birth-right, and the youngest according to his youth.

Q. What did they think of this arrangement?

A. They marvelled at it.

Q. Did Joseph send them provision from his table?

A. Yes; he "sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs."

Q. What directions did Joseph give his steward in relation to the return of his brethren?

A. He told him to fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money into his sack.

Q. Did he direct anything more should be put in Benjamin's sack?

A. He said, In the sack of the youngest put my cup, my silver cup, besides his corn-money.

Q. How long did his brethren tarry with him?

A. As soon as it was light in the morning, they started homeward.

Q. By what authority were they brought back?

A. After they left the city, Joseph sent his steward to bring them back, and to inquire of them why they had rewarded evil for good.

Q. What reply did they make to this charge?

A. They were amazed and said, God for-

bid that thy servants should do according to this thing. They reminded the steward that they had returned the money which they found in their sacks after getting home, and queried, how then should they steal out of his lord's house silver or gold!

Q. What proof did they give of their innocence?

A. So sure were they of this, they said that with whomsoever the cup should be found, let him die, and we also will be thy lord's bondmen.

Q. Did they make search for the silver cup?

A. Yes; the steward, in accordance with their wishes, began with the eldest, and said that he with whom it was found should be his servant, but the rest should be blameless.

Q. Did he find it?

A. After searching all the rest, he came to Benjamin's sack, and there the cup was found.

Q. What did these poor men do?

A. They rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass and returned to the city.

Q. What befel them there?

A. They went at once to Joseph's house, for he was still there, and fell before him on the ground.

Q. What did Joseph say to them?

A. He said, What deed is this that ye have done; wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

Q. How could so good a man as Joseph practise deceit?

A. It may have been that, in Joseph's desire to know if his brethren would leave Benjamin in bondage and thus deprive their father of both his favorite sons, he took this method to try them.

Q. But would this excuse duplicity?

A. The sequel so clearly sets forth the kind and tender feelings of Joseph for his family, that we may not judge him of an intention to do wrong, even though we may feel the force of the adage, Never do evil that good may come.

Q. Which of Joseph's brothers replied to him?

A. Judah answered, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out our iniquity; behold, we are thy servants, both we and he with whom the cup is found.

Q. Did Joseph receive them all as bondmen?

A. He said, Nay, but the man in whose

hand the cup is found shall be my servant; and as for you, get you in peace unto your father.

Q. Did one of the brothers seem especially distressed at the decision of Joseph?

A. Judah was troubled and drew near to Joseph and told him how dear Benjamin was to their father, that he was the child of his old age, that his brother was dead, and that he alone was left of his mother.

Q. Did he tell Joseph with what reluctance his father consented to Benjamin's coming with them?

A. Yes; he kept nothing from Joseph, and said, Seeing our father's life is bound up in the lad's life, if we return without him, he will die, and thy servants will have brought down the gray hairs of our father with sorrow to the grave.

Q. Did Judah offer to remain in Benjamin's place?

A. He prayed Joseph to allow him to be his bondman instead of the lad, for he felt that he could not go to his father unless Benjamin was with him.

Q. Did Joseph manifest any tenderness of spirit when thus appealed to?

A. He caused every man to go out from his presence, and he then made himself

known unto his brethren. In doing so, he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard him.

Q. In what way did he make himself known to his brethren?

A. He said, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live.

Q. What did they say?

A. They were so troubled that they could not answer him; but Joseph said, Come near me, I pray you; I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.

Q. Did he endeavor to console them?

A. He told them not to be grieved nor angry with themselves, for God did send him before them to preserve life.

Q. Did he propose to his brethren to remove to Egypt?

A. He bade them haste and bring his father, and their families, for there were yet five years of famine; and he wanted them all near him.

Q. What especial word did he send to Israel, his father?

A. That he wanted him to come and dwell in the land of Goshen, with his children and his children's children, and his flocks and his herds; and that he would nourish him during the famine.

Q. Did he bid his brethren tell his father of the position he held in Egypt?

A. He said, Tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and haste and bring him hither.

Q. Did he then embrace Benjamin?

A. He fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

Q. Did Joseph manifest affection for the rest of his brethren?

A. He kissed all his brethren and wept upon them, and after that they talked with him.

Q. Was Pharaoh pleased when he heard that Joseph's brethren were with him?

A. He was well pleased, and his servants also.

Q. What were the instructions he gave Joseph concerning his father and brethren?

A. Pharaoh told Joseph to say to his brethren, "This do ye; lade your beasts, and go get you unto the land of Canaan, and take your father and your households, and come unto me, and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land."

Q. Did Joseph do as Pharaoh directed him?

A. He furnished the children of Israel with

wagons as Pharaoh commanded, and not only gave them provisions for the way, but also gave them all a change of raiment.

Q. Did he give Benjamin more than the rest?

A. To Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

Q. What was his advice to his brethren when he parted with them?

A. He charged them saying, See that ye fall not out by the way.

Q. Did their father believe them when they told him that "Joseph was yet alive"?

A. No; Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed it not.

Q. What convinced him that they had seen their brother?

A. When they told him all Joseph had said, and he saw the wagons, "his spirit revived," and he said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die.

Q. Did Jacob and his family remove to Egypt?

A. "Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac."

Q. Where is the city of Beersheba situated?

A. In the southern extremity of what is called the Holy Land.

Q. We sometimes hear the expression from Dan to Beersheba; what does that mean?

A. As Dan is a city in the northern extremity, it denotes the whole extent of the land of promise.

Q. What occurred to Israel in the night at Beersheba?

A. He had visions and heard his name called, and answered, Here am I; and then it is written, God said, I am the God of thy father; fear not to go down to Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation.

Q. How many were there in Jacob's household?

A. "All the souls in the house of Jacob, that went into Egypt with him, were threescore and six."

Q. Did Joseph go to meet his father?

A. He made ready his chariot, and went to meet his father; when he met him he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

Q. What answer did Joseph propose to his brethren that they should give to Pharaoh when he asked them their trade?

A. He told them, when Pharaoh should ask, "what is your occupation?" to say you are shepherds.

Q. Why did he wish them to say that they were shepherds.

A. He wished them to dwell in the land of Goshen ; and the shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians?

Q. Was this their occupation?

A. Their "trade" had been to feed cattle from their youth, both they and their fathers.

Q. Did Joseph present his brethren to Pharaoh?

A. He took five of them, and presented them to the king.

Q. Did the king seem friendly disposed toward them?

A. Yes; he told Joseph to give them the best of the land, to let them dwell in Goshen, and if there were any active men among them, to make them rulers over his cattle.

Q. Can you describe the interview between Jacob and Pharaoh?

A. "Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh."

Q. What question did Pharaoh ask Jacob?

A. He said, How old art thou?

Q. Give Jacob's answer to the king.

A. He replied, The days of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few

and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers. And he blessed Pharaoh again and went out from before him.

Q. Did the famine increase in the land?

A. It was very great in all the land; and the people came to Joseph to buy bread.

Q. What did they do when they no longer had money?

A. They besought him to take their cattle.

Q. Had they sufficient cattle to pay for all they required?

A. Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses and cattle, flocks and herds; but after a time these failed also?

Q. What did they propose to Joseph, after that?

A. That he should take their land; and he bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, except the lands of the priests.

Q. Why were the lands of the priests excepted?

A. These were excepted, because the priests had a portion assigned them by Pharaoh.

Q. After Joseph had bought all the land, what arrangement did he make with the people?

A. That they should sow the land and give the fifth part of the increase to Pharaoh, and four parts should be theirs for food and for seed.

Q. Were the people grateful for this provision?

A. They said to Joseph, Thou hast saved our lives; let us find grace in thy sight, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

Q. Did Joseph make it a law over all the land, that Pharaoh should have one-fifth of the crops?

A. Yes; it prevailed over all the land except that owned by the priests.

Q. Were Jacob and his family prosperous?

A. They grew and multiplied exceedingly.

Q. How long did Jacob live in Egypt?

A. Seventeen years.

Q. What request did he make of Joseph when he felt that the time drew near when he must die?

A. He called Joseph to him, and said, Bury me not in Egypt, I pray thee, but I would lie with my fathers, and bury me in their burying-place.

Q. Did Joseph promise to do this?

A. He promised his father he would do as he wished.

Q. After Israel was taken sick, what did Joseph do?

A. He brought his sons Manasseh and Ephraim to their grandfather for his blessing.

Q. Could Israel see the sons of Joseph?

A. His eyes were dim from age, so that he could not see; but he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me and I will bless them.

Q. Did Joseph present them according to their ages, as was the custom, the oldest first?

A. He brought them to his father, who embraced and kissed them. Manasseh he placed at the right hand of his father and Ephraim at the left.

Q. What was there remarkable in the blessing which followed?

A. Israel stretched out his right hand and placed it upon Ephraim's head, and his left hand he put upon Manasseh's.

Q. Did Joseph observe this?

A. Joseph saw it, and held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's to Manasseh's head, saying, Not so, my father, for this is the first-born: put thy right hand upon his head.

Q. Did Israel refuse to do this?

A. He refused, saying, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great, but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he.

Q. What language did Israel use in blessing the children?

A. He first blessed Joseph, and then said, the God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God who fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers, Abram and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

Q. Did he say anything more concerning the children?

A. He said, "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh, and he set Ephraim before Manasseh."

Q. Did he leave a larger inheritance to Joseph than his brethren?

A. He said to Joseph, Behold I die, but God shall be with you and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. I have given thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite.

Q. Did Israel have his other sons called together?

A. He said, Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days.

Q. Did he predict what should come upon each of them?

A. As if he foresaw their future, he told each what should befall him.

Q. Reuben and Judah have been spoken of as having been moved with sympathy for Joseph when he was sold by his brethren; what did he say to them?

A. To Reuben he said, Thou art my first born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power; but, unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.

Q. And what of Judah?

A. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise. Thy hand shall be upon the neck of thine enemies. Thy father's children shall bow down before thee. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Q. Can you tell what was said of Joseph?

A. Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him and hated him, but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

Q. Was he to continue to be blessed?

A. Israel further said, The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

Q. Was Benjamin's portion equally pleasant?

A. It was said, Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.

Q. Did Israel speak of his children as tribes?

A. He said, All these are the twelve tribes of Israel; and their father spake to them, and blessed them, and requested, that when he was gathered to his people, that they should bury him in the cave of his kindred, where he had buried Leah.

Q. Did he pass away at that time?

A. After he made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up his spirit.

Q. How old was Israel when he died?

A. An hundred and forty-seven years old.

Q. Did Joseph and his brethren take the body of their father, and bury it as he requested?

A. Joseph called the physicians, and had

the body of his father embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.

Q. Did Joseph ask liberty of Pharaoh to carry his father to the cave of Machpelah?

A. He did; and Pharaoh not only consented, but the servants and elders of his house, and the elders of Egypt, with their chariots and horsemen, and all the household of Jacob, except the little ones, went with him; so that there was a very great company.

Q. Did Joseph and his brethren return to Egypt after they had buried their father?

A. They all returned; and Joseph's brethren were now fearful that Joseph would requite them for the evil they had done him.

Q. Was Joseph aware of their feelings?

A. They sent a messenger to Joseph, asking his forgiveness.

Q. What did Joseph do?

A. He wept when they spake to him and fell down before him, saying, Behold, we are thy servants; he bade them fear not, for he would nourish them and their little ones. He spake kindly and comforted them.

Q. How long did Joseph live?

A. He lived an hundred and ten years. He saw the children of Ephraim to the third

generation ; and also held upon his knee the grandson of Manasseh.

Q. What request did Joseph make of his brethren just before his death ?

A. He said, God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ; and when you go, carry up my bones from hence.

Q. Did they embalm the body of Joseph ?

A. Yes ; his body was embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt.

CHAPTER V.

PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER — MOSES — MIDIAN —
BURNING BUSH — AARON — PHARAOH'S RE-
FUSAL TO RELEASE THE ISRAELITES —
THEIR SUBSEQUENT DEPARTURE — PHARAOH
AND HIS HOST DESTROYED.

IN our history we have reached the Book of Exodus — the second book of the Pentateuch.

Q. Do you know what the name signifies ?

A. Exodus is so called because it contains an account of the *exodus* or departure of the Israelites out of Egypt.

Q. What is the signification of Pentateuch?

A. The first five books of the Bible, said to be written by Moses, are called the Pentateuch.

Q. Did the Israelites continue to prosper after the death of Joseph?

A. The Scripture says, They multiplied and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them.

Q. How long did they continue prosperous?

A. After the death of the brethren of Joseph, and all that generation had passed away, there arose a new king who knew not Joseph, and he became jealous of the Israelites.

Q. In what way did he manifest his jealousy?

A. He said unto his people, Behold the children of Israel are mightier than we; let us deal wisely with them, lest if there should be a war, they might join our enemies and take possession of our land.

Q. What means did they devise to bring the Israelites into bondage?

A. They set taskmasters over them, to afflict them with heavy burdens.

Q. What effect did this produce?

A. The more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew; but their lives were made bitter because of their hard bondage.

Q. In what were they made to labor?

A. In mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, they were made to serve with rigor.

Q. Were the Pyramids of Egypt built by the Israelites?

A. They are supposed by some to have been erected by the Israelites during their bondage in Egypt. But there is no allusion to the Pyramids in the Bible, and modern researches assign them to a later period.

Q. What did Pharaoh command should be done to diminish their numbers?

A. That every male child should be cast into the river, but the daughters should be saved alive.

Q. Have we an account of one child that was preserved in a remarkable manner?

A. Yes; the mother of Moses, after concealing him for three months, made an ark of bulrushes and daubed it with slime and

pitch, and put her child in it, and laid it among the flags by the river's brink.

Q. Did she place any one to watch what might befall him?

A. His sister stood afar off to see what should be done unto him.

Q. Who came down to the river not long afterward?

A. Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe, and her maidens walked along the river's side, and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent one of them to bring it to her.

Q. How did she feel toward the child?

A. When she opened the ark, the child wept, and she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.

Q. What did she do with the babe?

A. Moses' sister was standing near and asked if she should get a nurse among the Hebrew women to take care of the child for her?

Q. Did the king's daughter approve of it?

A. She said, Go; and the maid called her mother, and the princess gave the child into her care, saying, Nurse it for me, and I will give thee wages.

Q. Did Pharaoh's daughter name the child?

A. It was she who first called him Moses, because she "drew him out of the water."

Q. Did Moses continue in the court of Pharaoh after he was grown?

A. Not long; soon after he was grown, a circumstance occurred which occasioned Moses to leave Egypt.

Q. What was that circumstance?

A. He went out to his brethren, and saw their oppression; he also saw an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, and there being no one near, Moses took part with the Hebrew and slew the man and hid him in the sand.

Q. Was not this act discovered?

A. When he went out on the second day, he saw two Hebrews quarrelling, and he said to him who was in the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? and the man replied, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us; intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian?

Q. What did Moses say?

A. He said, Surely this thing is known, and he was afraid.

Q. Did Pharaoh hear of it?

A. Yes; and sought to slay Moses.

Q. How did Moses escape?

A. He fled from Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.

Q. Where is Midian?

A. It is a country lying south-east of Canaan.

Q. What is said of its inhabitants?

A. They were a commercial people, and traded with Egypt in spices, balm, &c. It was to a company of these merchants that Joseph's brethren sold him.

Q. Does it not say, these were Ishmaelites?

A. Yes; but in one place they are called Midianites, they being one people.

Q. With whom did Moses meet at the well?

A. The daughters of the priest of Midian.

Q. How many daughters were there?

A. There were seven; and when they brought their flocks to the well to water them, the shepherds drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them to water their flocks, by which they were enabled to return home sooner than usual.

Q. Did their father ask them how it was they came so soon?

A. Their father said to them, How is it that ye are come so soon to-day? and they told him that an Egyptian had delivered them from the shepherds and had watered their flocks for them.

Q. Did he query with them concerning the Egyptian?

A. He said, Why is it that ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread.

Q. Did Moses come to the house of the priest?

A. He came, and was contented to dwell there; and he married Zipporah, one of the daughters.

Q. Did Moses engage in any business?

A. He kept the flocks of Jethro his father-in-law.

Q. Where did he lead the flocks?

A. To the back side of the desert, to Mount Horeb, which is called the Mountain of God.

Q. What did Moses see here that was remarkable?

A. He saw a bush burned with fire, and it was not consumed; and he said, I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.

Q. Did he hear a voice calling him?

A. He heard a voice which said, Moses! Moses! and he said, Here am I.

Q. What voice was this which Moses heard, and what did it tell him?

A. It was the voice of the Lord, who is a spirit, and it was therefore a spiritual voice, and it said unto Moses, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Q. What does the burning of the bush signify?

A. We will first refer to the fact of Moses taking his flocks to the back side of the desert, which is figurative of a retired and solitary place.

Q. How are we to be instructed by this circumstance?

A. The gathering of the flocks may represent the centring of every faculty of the mind, producing an introversion, or *quiet* condition, in which may be heard the teachings of the "still small voice."

Q. Was this the same voice that called to Moses?

A. No doubt of it; for it is the voice of the Lord heard by the spiritual ear.

Q. And what are we to understand by the bush which was burned and not consumed?

A. This may be compared to a manifestation of the light of Christ, or word of God *in* man. The bush may represent a green or *living product* or shrub, which the fire or the word of the Lord would enkindle, and which would burn or give light and warmth without diminution.

Q. What was meant by the command to "put off thy shoes from off thy feet?"

A. In that day it was considered improper to wear shoes or sandals even in the house; every traveller must leave them at the door

and enter barefoot; so that Moses could understand why he should put off his shoes, if the ground whereon he stood was holy ground.

Q. In what way can we apply it?

A. We sometimes hear the figure used to illustrate the importance of putting aside our own wills or understanding, when the mind is visited by divine impressions, comparable to standing on holy ground, so that we may be prepared to yield obedience to divine requisitions.

Q. What further was said to Moses on this memorable occasion?

A. We read that God made himself known to Moses on this occasion as the God of his fathers, and He told him that He had heard the cry of His people who were in Egyptian bondage; and because of their hard task-masters He pitied them, and would bring them out of that land, into a good land which flowed with milk and honey.

Q. Did He signify to Moses that He would make him instrumental in their deliverance?

A. He told Moses that He would send him to Pharaoh, that he might bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Q. Did Moses feel willing to undertake the mission?

A. Moses said, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh?

Q. Did Moses query what he should say, to convince the children of Israel that God had sent him?

A. Moses said, When I tell the children of Israel that the God of their fathers hath sent me, and they ask His name, what shall I say unto them?

Q. What reply did Moses receive?

A. "God said unto Moses, I Am that I Am, and thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

Q. Did Moses receive further directions what to do?

A. He was told to gather the elders of Israel together, and tell them that He who had sent him had seen their afflictions, and was about to deliver them, and the people would believe him. And they then were to present themselves to the king, and ask him to let them go.

Q. Was it said that the king would be willing?

A. No; God foresaw that Pharaoh would object, and because of this, Egypt would be visited with many plagues.

Q. Did Moses set out on his mission at once?

A. Moses hesitated ; he was sure the people would not believe him, nor hearken to his voice.

Q. What proof was given him that they would ?

A. It is said that the rod which was in the hand of Moses, when cast upon the ground, turned to a serpent, and Moses fled from it ; he was told to take it up by the tail ; he caught it and it became a rod in his hand.

Q. Was there another evidence furnished Moses of the power of the Spirit that was communing with him ?

A. It is recorded that the Lord said to Moses, Put thy hand into thine bosom ; he did so, and when he took it out, his hand was leprous as snow ; and he was told to put it in his bosom the second time, and when he drew it out, it was restored like the other.

Q. What was the third sign that was to be given to the children of Israel, if the two which have been mentioned failed to convince them ?

A. He was to take water of the river and pour it out on the dry land, and the water that was poured out should be changed to blood.

Q. Is there spiritual teaching in these miracles which were shown Moses ?

A. The rod that Moses held in his hand may be compared to the staff of faith, which, when cast aside or thrown on the ground, becomes as a serpent which is twisting and twining in its character, and is to be shunned; but when, at the divine command, we take up this serpent, it becomes again as a rod in the hand, upon which we may lean.

Q. What does the putting of the hand in the bosom imply?

A. That if we are obedient to what is required of us, although it may be as simple a thing as putting the hand in the bosom, we may be made witnesses of the power of the Highest, as Moses was.

Q. What can be said of the third: the water from the river, that was to be poured on the ground?

A. This may be compared to an offering, which, though called for, may be felt to be as weak as water, but when in obedience to the still small voice it is poured upon the *dry ground*, it becomes changed as to blood, which is figurative of strength and life.

Q. Was Moses now prepared to go into Egypt?

A. Moses still endeavored to excuse himself, saying, I am not eloquent neither before nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant;

but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue.

Q. What rebuke did Moses receive?

A. "The Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now go and I will be thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say."

Q. Was Moses still rebellious or wavering?

A. He replied, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

Q. Was the weakness of Moses condescended to?

A. Yes; Aaron the brother of Moses, who spoke well, was permitted to go with him to be his spokesman.

Q. What was said to Moses about it?

A. The promise was, That the Lord would be with them; that Aaron should be as mouth for Moses, and Moses should be Aaron's director; and that he should take his rod (his staff of faith) in his hand, "wherewith to do his signs."

Q. What did Moses' father-in-law say to his going into Egypt?

A. When Moses talked with him, he said, Go in peace.

Q. Did Moses fear to meet the men from whom he fled when he came to Midian ?

A. No ; he was assured his enemies were dead, and he took his wife and his sons and put them upon an ass, and returned to the land of Egypt, taking "the rod of God in his hand."

Q. Did Aaron go with Moses ?

A. Moses went out into the wilderness and met Aaron in the Mount of God, and kissed him ; he told Aaron all the words which the Lord had given him, and they went and gathered the elders of the children of Israel.

Q. Did they receive them ?

A. Yes ; they and the people believed, and when they heard that the Lord had remembered them in their afflictions, they bowed their heads and worshipped.

Q. How did Pharaoh receive them ?

A. He said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go ? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.

Q. What did they ask of Pharaoh after this refusal ?

A. That he would let them go into the wilderness, a three days' journey into the desert to sacrifice unto the Lord their God.

Q. Did the king consent to this ?

A. No ; he told Moses and Aaron to get

to their own burdens, and not take the people from their work.

Q. Did he increase the burdens of the Israelites?

A. Instead of furnishing them with straw, as heretofore, to make brick, they were obliged to gather it for themselves, and to furnish as many bricks, or more than before. They were oppressed in every way.

Q. Was there a reason given for increasing their labor?

A. They were charged with being idle, and, therefore dissatisfied and ready to listen to Moses and Aaron.

Q. Did the people become dissatisfied with Moses and Aaron?

A. The elders as they went out from Pharaoh, met Moses and Aaron and said unto them, The Lord look upon you and judge. You have caused us to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, and he will put a sword in their hands to slay us.

Q. What effect had this upon Moses?

A. He turned unto the Lord and said, Wherefore hast thou evil-entreated this people; why is it that thou hast sent me? for since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy

name he hath done evil to this people; neither hast Thou delivered them!

Q. Was Moses reassured that he was acting in obedience to the divine mind?

A. We read that God spake unto Moses, and testified "that unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob I was known by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah I was not known. I have also established my covenants with them, and I have heard the groanings of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered my covenant."

Q. What message did he give Moses for the Israelites?

A. He bade Moses say unto them that he would bring them out from under the burdens of the Egyptians into the land he had promised their fathers; that he would redeem them with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments; and that he would take them for a people and he would be their God.

Q. What is meant by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knowing the Lord as God Almighty, and not by his name Jehovah?

A. They knew him as a God of power and of covenants; but as a self-existent and immutable God, as the name Jehovah implies,

they had not known him. He therefore declared unto Moses, I AM that I AM.

Q. When Moses delivered the message he had received, did it increase the people's faith in him?

A. They hearkened not unto him for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage.

Q. Was Moses discouraged?

A. He said, If the children of Israel hearken not unto me, how shall Pharaoh hear me who am of uncircumcised lips. But the Lord said unto Moses, Speak thou unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt, all that I say unto thee.

Q. Was Pharaoh persuaded by what he heard to release the Israelites?

A. His determination to keep them seemed unmoved, but he asked of Moses and Aaron a miracle to show by what authority they made their request.

Q. Did Moses perform a miracle?

A. No; but Aaron on this occasion cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and it became a serpent.

Q. Was Pharaoh astonished?

A. He called his wise men and magicians that they might do the same thing.

Q. Could they turn their rods into serpents also?

A. Yes; but it is said Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.

Q. Can this miracle be spiritually interpreted?

A. We have heard it alluded to, as representing the superiority of Aaron's faith to that of the magicians. The serpents into which the rods had been changed may be used as the symbol of wisdom. Jesus said to his disciples, "Be ye wise as serpents;" and Aaron's wisdom being superior to that of the magicians, he overcame them by it.

Q. What was the visitation which next came upon Egypt?

A. The waters of Egypt were turned into blood, so that the fish died, and their streams became offensive.

Q. What did the Egyptians do for water to drink?

A. They digged round about the river for water to drink, until the seven days were fulfilled in which the waters were smitten.

Q. Did Moses again appeal to Pharaoh?

A. Moses was commanded to go again to the king and say unto him, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

Q. What was the penalty attached to his refusal?

A. That the rivers and streams and ponds

should bring forth frogs, and that they would get into the houses and bed-chambers, and on the beds, and in their ovens and kneading-troughs.

Q. When the frogs came, did Pharaoh relent?

A. He sent for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me and my people, and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice unto the Lord.

Q. How did Moses answer this request?

A. Moses said, Be it according to thy word. The frogs shall depart from thee, that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the Lord our God.

Q. Did the frogs depart, and did Pharaoh keep his word?

A. The frogs were taken away, but Pharaoh's heart was still hard, and he would not let the people go.

Q. What was the consequence of his continued unwillingness to release them.

A. Afflictions and diseases of various kinds came upon Egypt, enough, it would seem, to soften the hardest heart; but Pharaoh remained inexorable until the first-born of all the Egyptians was smitten. From the first-born of Pharaoh on his throne to the captive

in the dungeon, none escaped ; even the first-born of the cattle was smitten.

Q. Were Pharaoh and the Egyptians then urgent for the Israelites to be gone ?

A. They rose in the night, and called for Moses and Aaron, amid great lamentations ; for there was not a house where there was not one dead, and they bade them go forth with their people, their flocks and their herds, and serve the Lord as they wished.

Q. Did Pharaoh ask for the blessing of Moses ?

A. When he bade them be gone, he said, And bless me also.

Q. How many Israelites went out from Egypt at this time ?

A. "Six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. A mixed multitude also went with them, and flocks and herds, even very many cattle."

Q. How long had the Israelites dwelt in Egypt ?

A. They had sojourned in Egypt four hundred and thirty years.

Q. Was the night of their departure made memorable by the establishment of a ceremonial ?

A. Yes ; the night was to be observed unto the Lord by the children of Israel in their

generations, for bringing them out of the land of bondage; and the festival was called the Passover.

Q. Was there an especial ordinance connected with this passover?

A. No stranger should partake of it?

Q. What is the signification of the word Passover?

A. It implies a passing over. The name was chosen in commemoration of the Israelites having escaped the destroying angel, which smote the first-born of the Egyptians, but passed over the houses of the Hebrews.

Q. Do the modern Jews continue to observe the Passover?

A. They do, continuing the feast of unleavened bread seven days, in accordance with the command of Moses, that for seven days there should be no leavened bread found in their houses.

Q. What direction did the Israelites take when they went out of Egypt?

A. They went not through the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer, but took their journey from Succoth to Etham.

Q. Did they take the bones of Joseph with them?

A. Moses remembered the request of Joseph, and carried his bones with them.

Q. What guided them in their path?

A. The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.

Q. What did Pharaoh do when he heard the Israelites had fled?

A. He regretted having consented to it, and took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, with captains over every one of them, and pursued after them.

Q. Where did Pharaoh and his army overtake them?

A. They were encamped by the sea.

Q. Were they alarmed when they saw the great host of Pharaoh?

A. They were sore afraid, and said unto Moses, Wherefore didst thou take us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness; did we not tell thee to let us alone, that we might serve the Egyptians?

Q. Did Moses endeavor to inspire them with confidence?

A. He said to the people, "Fear ye now, stand still, and see the salvation of God which he will show you to-day. The Egyptians which ye see to-day, ye shall see no more forever."

Q. In what way did Moses expect them to be delivered?

A. He told them to hold their peace; that the Lord would deliver them.

Q. How was their deliverance wrought?

A. It is written, that the cloud which went before the camp of Israel, was removed and went behind them and stood between the Egyptians and the Israelites, so that the one came not near the other all the night.

Q. What part did Moses act on this occasion?

A. He stretched out his hand over the sea, and by a strong east wind all that night, the Lord caused the sea to go back, and the waters and dry land were divided.

Q. Did the Israelites attempt to cross over?

A. They went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall upon the right hand and upon the left.

Q. Did Pharaoh pursue them?

A. In the morning watch, the Egyptians would have fled from the face of Israel, their chariot-wheels dragged heavily, but Pharaoh gave not back.

Q. What happened him and those who were with him?

A. As they passed through the sea, the waters returned and they were all destroyed. There remained not so much as one of them.

Q. Did the Israelites acknowledge the power by which they had been delivered?

A. Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and believed Him and his servant Moses.

Q. Did they celebrate His praise?

A. Moses and the children of Israel sang, saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

Q. Was that all of the song that is recorded?

A. They also sang, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation. He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him;"—with much more that is very beautiful, and which will be found in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus.

CHAPTER VI.

MIRIAM THE PROPHETESS — WILDERNESS —
ISRAELITES FED WITH MANNA — AMALEK—
JOSHUA — JUDGES APPOINTED BY MOSES —
MOUNT SINAI — THE TEN COMMANDMENTS —
PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE.

Question. What is the name of the prophetess that went out with her timbrel in her hand?

Answer. Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aaron, went out with her timbrel, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

Q. What caused the people to murmur against Moses soon after this?

A. They went a three days' journey into the wilderness, and found no water, and then they came to Marah; but the waters of Marah were bitter, as the name signifies, and the people murmured and said, What shall we drink?

Q. What did Moses do?

A. He cried unto the Lord, and he was shown a tree, which, when he cast into the waters, they were made sweet.

Q. What covenant was made on this occasion ?

A. If they would diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord, and would do that which is right in his sight, and would give ear to all his commandments, and keep all his statutes, that He would put none of the diseases upon them that He brought upon the Egyptians ; for, said He, I am the Lord that healeth thee.

Q. Where did they next encamp ?

A. They came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees ; and they encamped by the waters.

Q. What was the wilderness called that they came to after leaving Elim ?

A. The wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai.

Q. What happened them there ?

A. They hungered and longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt ; and murmured against Moses for bringing them into the wilderness to die.

Q. What further manifestation of divine regard was here witnessed ?

A. While Aaron spoke to the whole congregation, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, and a promise was received through Moses, that they should be fed.

Q. In what way were they fed in this desolate place ?

A. In the evening a flock of quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning manna, like dew, laid round about the host.

Q. To what was this manna compared?

A. It was a small round thing, and laid upon the ground like hoar-frost; it was like coriander-seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

Q. Were particular directions given how this manna should be gathered?

A. It was to be gathered every day, according to every man's eating; an omer for every man, and in this proportion was it to be gathered for those who were in his tent, or composed his immediate family.

Q. What is an Omer?

A. A Hebrew measure, the tenth part of an ephah; a little more than five pints.

Q. If any attempted to gather more than his portion, could he eat it the next day?

A. No; those who did not hearken unto Moses, and gathered more than they were bid, found next morning it was unfit for food.

Q. On the sixth day, did they provide for the seventh?

A. On the sixth day every man was directed to gather two omers instead of one, that they might rest on the Sabbath.

Q. Did it not spoil as on other days?

A. It was not spoiled; and moreover, those who neglected to provide a double quantity, went out on the seventh day, and there was no manna to be gathered.

Q. Was a portion of this manna preserved for future generations?

A. Moses told Aaron to take a pot, and put an omer full of manna in it, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for future generations.

Q. Did Aaron obey Moses?

A. Aaron did so, and laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.

Q. How long did the Israelites eat manna?

A. It is said, they ate manna forty years, until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan.

Q. Did the children of Israel murmur against Moses after this?

A. In their journey they pitched their tents in Rephidim, and there was no water there; and the people chid Moses, saying, Give us water to drink.

Q. What was the reply of Moses?

A. He replied, Why chide ye me. He then appealed unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people; they are ready to stone me.

Q. Was he instructed what to do ?

A. Moses was directed to take with him the elders of Israel, and go on before the people, with his rod in his hand ; and the Lord would stand before him on a rock in Horeb, and Moses should strike the rock, and water would flow out of it, for the people to drink.

Q. What did Moses name the place ?

A. He called it Massah and Meribah, because of the chidings of the children of Israel, and because they said, Is the Lord among us or not ?

Q. What enemy did they meet here ?

A. Amalek came out against Israel in Rephidim.

Q. Who did Moses choose as the leader of the people ?

A. Joshua ; and Moses stood upon the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand.

Q. Who went with Moses to the top of the hill ?

A. Aaron and Hur.

Q. What office did Aaron and Hur perform for Moses ?

A. They held up the hands of Moses.

Q. For what purpose were Moses' hands held up ?

A. It is said that when they held up his

hands Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hands Amalek prevailed.

Q. Did Moses grow weary?

A. Yes; and they brought him a stone to sit upon. Aaron was on one side and Hur on the other, and staid his hands until the going-down of the sun.

Q. Did Joshua overcome the enemy?

A. Joshua discomfited or defeated Amalek before sunset.

Q. Of what is this account of Amalek typical?

A. We have said that Moses stood upon the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand. This hill may represent a situation exalted above the spirit, or the things of the world, and the rod is an emblem of faith in God.

Q. And what does Amalek signify?

A. Amalek may be compared to our greatest enemy, Self-will, when opposed to the seed or life of God in the soul, which is the true Israel.

Q. To what shall Aaron and Hur be likened?

A. Aaron signifies a teacher, also great strength; and Hur means whiteness, which is emblematical of purity; so that if our hands when they are ready to hang down,

in which position Amalek or Self-will would prevail, are upheld by wisdom and strength on the one hand and purity of heart on the other,—Israel, or the gift of God within us, will be victorious before the setting of the sun, or darkness comes over us.

Q. It is written that they brought Moses a stone to sit upon; what idea does this convey?

A. When Moses grew weary, he was furnished with a seat upon which to rest as immovable or firm as a stone.

Q. But Joshua went out against Amalek?

A. Joshua was chosen the captain of the host of Israel. Beautiful figure! Joshua signifies Saviour. What could be more in keeping with the whole subject!

Q. Did Moses meet with his father-in-law?

A. The father-in-law of Moses heard what God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, and went to him in the wilderness where he was encamped at the Mount of God.

Q. What did Jethro think of all that Moses told him as he recounted the wonderful deliverance of Israel?

A. He rejoiced for all the goodness that had been shown Israel, and blessed the Lord who had delivered the people from Egyptian bondage.

Q. Did Jethro counsel Moses in reference to the government of Israel?

A. When he saw that Moses was engaged from morning till night judging between one and another, and settling the affairs of all, he said, Why sittest thou alone to judge the people? Thou wilt surely wear out both thou and the people; thou art not able to bear it.

Q. What plan did he propose Moses should adopt, whereby he would be relieved?

A. He proposed that Moses should retain his position as Counsellor, but that he should provide out of the people able men, such as feared God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such as rulers over certain divisions; some to rule thousands, some hundreds, some fifties, and some tens.

Q. Did Moses act in accordance with the advice of his father-in-law?

A. He hearkened to his voice, and did all that he said. And the rulers judged the people at all seasons in small matters; but the hard cases were brought to Moses.

Q. What particular council grew, as it is believed, out of the appointment of these judges?

A. It is thought that the appointment of these judges was the foundation of the cele-

brated Sanhedrim, or general council of the Jewish nation ; consisting of seventy senators who assembled at stated times to determine the most important affairs of Church and State.

Q. Did Jethro continue with Moses ?

A. No ; after making him a visit, he departed to his own land.

Q. After leaving Rephidim, where did the Israelites next encamp ?

A. They came to the desert of Sinai, and encamped before the mount.

Q. Where is Mount Sinai situated ?

A. Between the two gulfs at the head of the Red Sea. It seems probable that Sinai and Horeb are only different heads or peaks of the same mountain.

Q. What do modern travellers say of this mountain ?

A. That it is not so lofty as some mountains around it, and in its form there is nothing peculiar to distinguish it from others ; its ascent is rough and difficult.

Q. Is there a building near its foot ?

A. At its foot stands the Monastery of St. Catharine, said to be built by the Emperor Justinian in the sixth century.

Q. Are visitors admitted into this monastery ?

A. On the east side is a window by which pilgrims and visitors are drawn up and let down in a basket by a rope and pulley.

Q. Is this window used for another purpose?

A. By the same means victuals and alms are given to Arabs, who are never permitted to enter the monastery for fear of outrage.

Q. Is there no door to the building?

A. There is a door, but it is only opened to admit the bishop.

Q. What is the shape of the monastery?

A. It is an irregular quadrangle, and is enclosed by high and solid walls, built with blocks of granite, and fortified by several towers.

Q. What is said of the enclosures?

A. There are eight or ten small courtyards, some of which are neatly laid out with flowers and vegetables. A great many vines, and also a few dates and cypress-trees, grow there.

Q. Are there wells connected with it?

A. In the convent are two deep and copious wells.

Q. Is there a garden attached to it?

A. A pleasant garden adjoins the building, into which there is a subterranean passage; the soil is stony, but in this climate, where

water is plenty, the very rocks will produce vegetation. The fruit is of the finest quality.

Q. Who has possession of this monastery?

A. The Greek Christians have had it in possession 1000 years, it having been given them by the Emperor Justinian.

Q. How was the top of the mountain formerly reached from this building?

A. By steps, of which it was computed there were fourteen thousand.

Q. Are these steps still preserved?

A. Some of them are broken, but those which remain are well made, and are easy to ascend and descend.

Q. For what is Mount Sinai principally celebrated?

A. For the Scriptural account of the laws given to Moses for the government of the Israelites.

Q. Was the power of the Highest especially manifested from this mount?

A. It is written there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, from which was heard a voice as from a trumpet, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.

Q. Was Moses especially spoken to

A. As the voice of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses

was called to come to the top of the mount.

Q. Did Moses obey the voice?

A. He went up, and the Lord talked with him, and then bade him go down to the people.

Q. What were the Commandments which Moses received?

A. I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God,—in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

Honor thy father and thy mother, that

thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Q. Were the people willing to receive these commandments?

A. They were awed by all they heard and saw, and said unto Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us lest we die.

Q. What commandment was reiterated?

A. That they should love the Lord alone; that they should not make unto themselves gods of silver or gold.

Q. What was said of the altar upon which the sacrifices were to be offered?

A. If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of *hewn* stone, for if thou lift thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.

Q. Were there other ordinances or laws established by Moses?

A. Many others are connected with this part of the history, but it is not deemed important that they should be brought into notice here.

Q. Where did Moses receive the tables of stone?

A. We read that Moses was directed to go up to the mount, where he should be given the tables of stone, and a law and commandments, that he might teach the people.

Q. Did Moses go alone?

A. Moses went up alone, telling the elders of Israel, that Aaron and Hur were with them, and if any man had any matters to do, let him ask them.

Q. How long did Moses continue in the mount?

A. Forty days and forty nights; and he here received instructions relative to the tabernacle, which should be made for the Lord.

Q. What request was he to make of the people?

A. That they who made an offering willingly, should bring of their possessions and make a sanctuary, that the Lord might dwell among them.

Q. Did Moses receive particular directions respecting the building of the tabernacle?

A. Yes; and all things were to be made in accordance with the pattern that was shown him in the mount.

Q. Was the construction of this temple very beautiful?

A. The form assigned was beautiful, and the furniture and ornaments were many of them to be of gold, and the vessels of pure gold.

Q. Of what were the curtains to be composed?

A. Of fine twined linen, and blue and purple and scarlet, with cherubim of cunning work, they were to be made.

Q. Were the hangings for the door of the same materials?

A. They were to be the same, wrought with needle-work.

Q. What does the care manifested in the making of this tabernacle teach us?

A. That it is designed to have a meaning in the parts so minutely described, vastly more important than merely a visible and outward one.

Q. Can we receive spiritual instruction from all that is said of it?

A. Under all of the material show of this gorgeous tabernacle, there is a representa-

tion of things spiritual, such as should be instructive throughout all generations.

Q. What should this induce us to do?

A. To become familiar with the description of this ancient sanctuary, and endeavor, by the aid of that spirit which can alone give us an understanding, to penetrate through its shadows into the sublime realities which they represent.

Q. Of what especial wrong were the Israelites guilty during the absence of Moses?

A. Being impatient at his long stay, they said to Aaron, Make us gods to go before us, for as for Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him. And Aaron took their gold and cast it into the fire, and fashioned it with a graving-tool into a calf.

Q. What did the people do with this golden calf?

A. They built an altar before it, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and the people sat down and ate and drank.

Q. What did Moses do when he came down from the mount and saw what had been done?

A. He was greatly distressed, and threw from him the two tables of stone which he held in his hand, and broke them beneath

the mount, and took the calf which they had made, and burned it in the fire and ground it to powder.

Q. What excuse did Aaron offer to Moses, when he remonstrated with him?

A. He told Moses he knew this people, that they were bent upon mischief, and were vexed at his long stay; and when they asked him to make a god for them to go before them, he took their gold and cast it into the fire, and it came out a calf.

Q. What was the language given Moses for the people?

A. The Lord said unto Moses, "Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiff-necked people. I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment and consume thee. Therefore, now, put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do with thee."

Q. Did the Israelites heed the injunction?

A. They stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.

Q. It is said, Moses now pitched the tabernacle without the camp. What did he call it?

A. He called it the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and those who sought the Lord entered it.

Q. What did the people do as Moses passed out to the tabernacle?

A. Every man stood at his tent-door, and when the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle-door, they worshipped in their tents.

Q. Whom did Moses discover, as he was turning to go away?

A. He saw Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, who departed not out of the tabernacle.

Q. What renewed encouragement did Moses receive at this time?

A. He sought for guidance in the way in which he should lead the people, and he was assured that the presence of the Lord should go with him, and that he should stand upon a rock.

Q. Did Moses replace the tables of stone which he had broken?

A. He hewed two tables of stone like the first, and went up to the mount and continued there forty days and forty nights, and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant—the ten commandments.

Q. What is said of the face of Moses as he descended from the mount?

A. As he talked with the people, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him, so that Moses put a veil over his face until he was done speaking to them.

Q. After the new tabernacle was finished, what did Moses do with it?

A. It is said that he took the anointing oil and anointed it and all that was therein.

Q. In what way did he finish the work?

A. He reared up a court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court-gate. So Moses finished the work.

Q. What is said of the cloud that rested upon the tabernacle?

A. It covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Q. Did Moses enter the tent while the cloud rested upon it?

A. No; he was not able to enter it while the cloud rested upon it and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Q. When the cloud was lifted, what did the children of Israel do?

A. When it was taken up, they journeyed forward, and when it rested upon the tabernacle, they did not go forward.

Q. Did the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire continue with them?

A. Throughout all their journeying the cloud was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.

Q. What was the promise given them, if they would walk in the statutes, and keep the commandments, which had been given them?

A. That they should have rain in due season, and the land should yield its increase, and that the trees of the field should yield fruit; that their threshing should reach unto the vintage and the vintage unto the sowing-time, and that they should eat bread to the full.

Q. What was said of their enemies?

A. That they should have peace in the land, and none should make them afraid; and as to their enemies, five of them might chase a hundred, and a hundred put ten thousand to flight.

Q. What was to come upon them if they were disobedient?

A. If they would not hearken unto the Lord and do his commandments, He would break the pride of their power, and make their heaven as iron and their earth as brass, and their strength should be spent in vain.

Q. Were the Israelites divided into tribes?

A. They were numbered and divided into tribes,—each one with the house of his fathers; and the sons of Jacob, twelve in number, were called the princes of Israel.

CHAPTER VII.

CHILDREN OF ISRAEL—ELEAZAR MADE PRIEST
—AARON'S DEATH—THE HABITS OF MOURN-
ING—BAALAM—THE LAND OF CANAAN—
THE COUNSEL OF MOSES TO JOSHUA—MOSES
BLESSES ISRAEL—THE DEATH OF MOSES.

Question. What was the blessing that Aaron should give the children of Israel?

Answer. Moses told Aaron to bless the children of Israel, and to say, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.

Q. Did they continue to be governed in their journeyings by the cloud upon the tabernacle?

A. Yes; whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was removed, they journeyed; and whether it was two days, or a month, or a year that it remained, they journeyed not.

Q. Did Moses send men to search the land of Canaan?

A. Moses sent the heads of the tribes of Israel to spy out the land, and see what it was, whether it was good or bad, whether the people dwelt in cities, or in tents, or in strongholds, and whether there was wood therein.

Q. What did they bring from this land?

A. Pomegranates and figs; and from the brook of Eschol, they brought a branch with one cluster of grapes that was borne between two men on a staff.

Q. Were the grapes so large as to require two men to carry them?

A. A cluster of grapes grows in that country at the present day to the weight of twelve pounds; in ancient times they might have been larger, and no doubt the men wished to present the fruit unbruised to Moses, and therefore carried it with care.

Q. Of what color were the grapes?

A. The Palestine grapes are mostly red or black; whence the common expression, the blood of grapes.

Q. What was sometimes made of the vine?

A. Sceptres for kings were sometimes made of the vine.

Q. What Scripture phrase gives an idea of a large and flourishing vine?

A. To sit under a man's own vine and fig-

tree signifies a state of both prosperity and peace.

Q. How long were the men gone?

A. They searched the land for forty days.

Q. What report did they bring of the land generally?

A. That it flowed with milk and honey, and that the fruit was fine; but the people dwelt in walled cities, and were very great: moreover, they saw the children of Anak there.

Q. Who were the children of Anak?

A. They were said to be giants; and the spies compared themselves to grasshoppers in their sight.

Q. Did this discourage the children of Israel from proceeding?

A. Caleb said, Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to do so; but the men who went up with him said they were not able, for the people were stronger than they were.

Q. What did the Israelites do?

A. The people wept that night, and murmured against Moses and against Aaron, and said, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt, or in the wilderness; and they proposed to one another to make a captain and return to Egypt.

Q. Did they carry out this proposition?

A. No. Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly; and Joshua and Caleb, who were among those that searched the land, spoke unto the company and said, The land which we passed through is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delight in us, He will bring us into this land and give it to us.

Q. Did they caution them against rebellion?

A. They said, Only rebel not against the Lord, neither fear the people; the Lord is with us; fear them not.

Q. Did they listen to this advice?

A. They were not convinced, but were ready to stone Joshua and Caleb with stones.

Q. Did Moses desire that the people should be forgiven for their rebellion?

A. Moses made this appeal, "Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of Thy mercy, and as Thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt until now.

Q. What answer was given Moses?

A. It is written that the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word, but these men who have seen my glory, have not hearkened to my voice, and surely they shall

not see the land promised their fathers; but my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land, and his seed shall possess it.

Q. Were there other exceptions made in relation to the exclusion of the disobedient Israelites from the land of promise?

A. Joshua the son of Nun was to enter the land, because he too had been faithful to the commandments of the Lord; and the little ones, whom the people thought would perish in the wilderness, were also to be brought in.

Q. Did the people after this rebel again?

A. There was sore rebellion among them; and it is written that many lost their lives on account of it; the tribe of Korah being entirely cut off.

Q. Did they again suffer for water?

A. When they came into the desert of Zin, there was no water for the congregation, and they murmured greatly.

Q. What was Moses instructed to do for them?

A. To take his rod and strike the rock, and water should flow out of it.

Q. Was Moses obedient to this command?

A. He took the rod and went with Aaron

to the rock and smote it; and said, Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock? And he lifted his hand and smote the rock twice, and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank and their beasts also.

Q. Was the manner of Moses reproved?

A. It was; and because he and his brother ascribed not the glory to the Lord before the people, they were told they should not bring them into the land which had been promised them.

Q. What was the water of this place called?

A. The water of Meribah, because the children of Israel rebelled against the Lord; but it is written, He was sanctified in them, by which we understand that His mercy was made known to them.

Q. Who died and was buried near this spot?

A. Miriam the prophetess.

Q. In which direction did Moses wish to travel from this point?

A. He wished to pass through the land of Edom; and sent messengers to the king asking his permission.

Q. Was it granted?

A. Edom said, Thou shalt not pass by me;

if thou dost, I will come out against thee with a sword.

Q. What did Moses promise, if they were permitted to pass through his dominion?

A. That they would not pass either to the right hand or the left; that neither their fields nor vineyards should be disturbed; neither would they drink of the water of the wells, if they were allowed to go by the king's highway.

Q. Did the king still refuse?

A. The king of Edom refused to let them pass through his border, therefore they turned away from him.

Q. Through what country did they pass?

A. They journeyed from Kadesh to Mount Hor.

Q. What occurred upon this mount?

A. Aaron was divested of his priestly garments, and they were placed upon his son Eleazar. And Aaron died there.

Q. What do we read of the sepulchre of Aaron?

A. Josephus and other historians place the sepulchre of Aaron on Mount Hor, and say that it is still venerated by the Arabs.

Q. Is it mentioned by more modern writers?

A. A modern traveller reports having

visited the spot, and found the supposed tomb in the care of a crippled Arab.

Q. Does he describe the tomb?

A. He says, The monument is about three feet high, and is protected by a small white building with a cupola.

Q. Who were with Aaron when he died?

A. Eleazar his son, to whom the priestly garments had been given, and his brother Moses.

Q. Moses and Eleazar returned without Aaron; what was the effect upon the people?

A. The whole congregation mourned for Aaron thirty days.

Q. What were some of the ceremonies of grief usual on occasions of death?

A. The near relatives rent their garments from the neck to the girdle, and a cry of lamentation and sorrow filled the room. This continued until the corpse was carried from the house.

Q. In Aaron's case it is said they mourned thirty days; was that unusual?

A. In many cases the ceremonies of grief lasted eight days, but for kings or persons of distinction it was commonly extended to a whole month or thirty days.

Q. Mourning women are alluded to by the prophet Jeremiah; to whom did he refer?

A. In those days it was usual to employ persons whose professed business it was to conduct the ceremonies of wailing and lamentation, for which they received compensation. They chanted in doleful strains the virtues of the dead, thus raising to a higher pitch the sorrowful feelings of relatives and friends, and causing them to find relief in floods of tears.

Q. Were instruments of music used to heighten the effect?

A. The wailings were often accompanied with some melancholy music of instruments.

Q. Did the Israelites continue to meet with difficulties in their journey?

A. The inhabitants of the land through which they passed were opposed to them, and gave them great trouble.

Q. Who sent for Balaam the prophet, to consult with him relative to the Israelites?

A. Balak, king of the Moabites.

Q. What prompted Balak to send for Balaam?

A. This was a common occurrence in ancient times, in difficult cases. There was a class of men regularly set apart to bless and to curse, and to foretell events, and Balaam was such an one.

Q. Did Balaam go to Balak?

A. He several times refused to go, but at length was prevailed upon by the princes of Moab to accompany them.

Q. Why did Balaam refuse?

A. He felt that it was not in accordance with the divine will that he should go; but he was no doubt sorely tempted by the profers of emolument of the king of Moab.

Q. In what way did the disposition of Balaam more particularly manifest itself?

A. By the unkindness shown the animal which he rode, it is evident that he was very angry; and he vented his ill-temper upon his beast.

Q. What reproof did Balaam receive?

A. It is written, that after he had smitten his ass three times in great anger, the animal spoke to Balaam, saying, Am I not thine ass; was I ever wont to do so to thee?

Q. Is it to be supposed that the ass spoke with the voice of a man?

A. A commentator on this passage, considered among the most pious and learned, has not scrupled to represent the whole transaction as occurring in a vision. Others have thought that Balaam's own heart, smiting him for his cruelty, put, as it were, words in the mouth of his ass.

Q. Was Balaam convinced that he was doing wrong?

A. He acknowledged that he had "sinned," and that he was willing to retrace his steps; but he was impressed with the belief that as he had started, he had better continue his journey, and resolved to speak no other words than those which should be given him by the Lord.

Q. Did Balak show his anxiety to consult Balaam by going to meet him?

A. When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went to meet him at a city on the utmost coast of Moab.

Q. What did the king say to Balaam?

A. He queried with him, why he did not come at once, and said, Did I not send for thee earnestly, and am I not able to promote thee to honor?

Q. Did Balaam assume anything to himself, or speak of his own powers?

A. He told Balak he had come unto him, but signified he had no power at all of himself; but what God should put in his mouth, that he should speak.

Q. What did Balak want Balaam to do?

A. He wished him to curse Jacob and defy Israel.

Q. Could Balaam do this?

A. Nay; he said, "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed, or how shall I defy

whom the Lord hath not defied? For, from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him;—lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

Q. Was Balak satisfied with this?

A. No; he exclaimed, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.

Q. What reason did Balaam offer for this?

A. He answered, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? Behold, I have received a commandment to bless, and He hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob; neither is there any divination against Israel.

Q. What request did Balak now make of Balaam?

A. That he should neither curse them at all nor bless them at all. But Balaam said to him, Told not I thee; all that the Lord speaketh that I must do.

Q. Balak took Balaam to see Israel from

another point, with the hope that he would yet grant his wish. Did Balaam do so?

A. The prophet saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, and he went not to seek enchantments, as at other times; but having his eyes opened, he saw Israel abiding in their tents according to their tribes;—and the spirit of God came upon him.

Q. What was the language of Balaam?

A. How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters. Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

Q. Did Balak express his dissatisfaction?

A. Balak was very angry, and he smote his hands together and said, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times; therefore now flee thou to thy place. I thought to promote thee to honor; but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honor.

Q. Did Balaam seem to regret not having been promoted?

A. He said to Balak, Did I not tell thy messengers, that if thou would give me thy

house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the commandment of God, to do either good or bad of mine own mind.

Q. What prophecy did Balaam repeat on this occasion?

A. I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh. There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel; out of Jacob shall come one who shall have dominion.

Q. Did Balaam leave Balak after this?

A. Balaam arose and returned home, and Balak also went his way.

Q. Did Moses continue to exhort the people to yield obedience to the commandments which had been given them?

A. He reminded them that the Lord their God is one Lord, and that the words which he had commanded should be in their heart, and they should teach them to their children; should talk of them when they sat down, and when they walked by the way, when they laid down and when they rose up; and that they should write them upon the posts of their houses and on their gate.

Q. Did he tell them in what way the love of God is sometimes shown?

A. He said, Thou shalt also consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.

Q. What did he say of the land, they were about to enter?

A. He told them it was a good land, a land of brooks, of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive and honey; a land wherein they should eat bread without scarceness,—they should not lack anything; a land whose stones were iron, and out of whose hills they might dig brass. And when they had eaten and were full, then they should bless the Lord their God for the good land which He had given them.

Q. Did Moses bid them be cautious when they were thus blessed?

A. He bade them beware that they forgot not the Lord their God when they had eaten and were full, and had built goodly houses and dwelt therein—and when their herds and flocks, and silver and gold, and all that they had, multiplied, lest their hearts should be lifted up, and they should forget Him who brought them out from the house of bondage.

Q. What did Moses say to Joshua?

A. He called Joshua and said to him before all Israel, Be strong and of good courage; for thou must go with this people unto the

land which the Lord hath given their fathers, and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

Q. Did he tell Joshua not to be afraid?

A. He said, The Lord will go before thee, He will be with thee, He will not fail thee nor forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed.

Q. How old was Moses at this time?

A. He was a hundred and twenty years old.

Q. Did he feel as if the time of his departure or death was at hand?

A. He felt assured the day approached when he must die, and he called Joshua, and they went together into the tabernacle, and Moses encouraged Joshua.

Q. Did he give the people a parting salutation?

A. He had the elders of all the tribes gathered, and their officers, that he might counsel them.

Q. Did he fear they would become stiff-necked and rebellious after his death?

A. He foresaw it, and bade them take a book of the law which he had written, and place it in the Ark of the Covenant, that it might be a witness against them.

Q. Did Moses repeat a Psalm, or a song, in the congregation?

A. He repeated the words of this song: Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. . . . For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance, etc.

Q. Did Moses bless the twelve tribes before his death?

A. He blessed them all.

Q. What was said of Benjamin?

A. The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall dwell with him all the day long.

Q. What of Joseph?

A. Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious things of the earth, and for the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush; let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren:

Q. What was said of Asher?

A. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath

are the everlasting arms, and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.

Q. What of them collectively, or of Israel?

A. Israel shall then dwell in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine, also his heavens shall drop down dew. . . Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency.

Q. Upon what mount did Moses overlook the land he was not to enter?

A. From mount Pisgah he saw all the land that was promised the children of Israel, but which he could not enter.

Q. Moses was an hundred and twenty years old. Was he feeble?

A. No; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Q. Where did Moses die?

A. In the valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but it is said that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

ELIMELECH AND FAMILY — BETHLEHEM-JUDAH
— DEATH OF ELIMELECH — MAHLON AND
CHILION — ORPAH AND RUTH — THEIR MAR-
RIAGE — THE DEATH OF MAHLON AND CHIL-
ION — NAOMI AND RUTH — RUTH GLEANS —
BOAZ — THE MOSAIC STATUTES — SALUTA-
TIONS — THE GATE OF THE CITY — BOAZ AND
HIS KINSMAN — MARRIAGE OF BOAZ.

WE are told that in some of the ancient records, the books of Ruth and Judges make one; but in our Bible, Ruth follows Judges as a sequel to it. The history of Ruth opens with an account of Elimelech and his family who went into the land of Moab, when there was a famine in Bethlehem-Judah.

Question. Is Bethlehem-Judah the same as the Bethlehem we read of in the New Testament?

Answer. It is the same that is celebrated as the birthplace of king David, and afterward of Jesus.

Q. What is the modern aspect of this noted city?

A. Travellers tell us, it is at present a large straggling village, with about three thousand inhabitants, nearly all professing Christians; it has one broad street, upon which stands a large building for public worship, in the shape of a cross, erected by the Empress Helena in the fourth century.

Q. Are there other places for religious purposes?

A. It has large convents belonging to the Roman Catholics, Greeks, and Armenians.

Q. What is the color of the inhabitants?

A. They are dark, almost approaching to black; they are said to be a bold and hardy race, and have successfully resisted Turkish oppression.

Q. Is the surrounding country fertile?

A. It is exceedingly fruitful, and no doubt from this fact the city derived its name, Bethlehem—the City of Bread.

Q. What are some of the products?

A. The principal are grapes, figs, and other fruits with which it abounds, and which form the chief support of the inhabitants.

Q. What occurred in the family of Elimelech soon after they went to Moab.

A. Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she with her two sons were left.

Q. What were the names of her sons?

A. Mahlon and Chilion.

Q. Did they marry?

A. They both married Moabitish maidens, one named Orpah and the other Ruth.

Q. How long did they continue in Moab?

A. After having lived there ten years, both of Naomi's sons died, and she was thus bereft of both husband and sons.

Q. What did Naomi do under the feeling of desolation?

A. She arose with her daughters-in-law to return to her own land, as she had "heard that the Lord had visited his people, in giving them bread."

Q. Did her daughters-in-law go with her?

A. They started with her, but on the way she said to them, Go return each to thy mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that ye may find rest each of you, in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud.

Q. Did Orpah and Ruth then leave their mother?

A. No; they said to her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

Q. Was Naomi willing they should go?

A. She remonstrated,—spoke of her deso-

late condition, and said, It grieveth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord is gone against me; then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and departed, but Ruth clung to her.

Q. Did their mother urge Ruth to go with her sister-in-law?

A. She said to Ruth, Behold, thy sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law.

Q. What was Ruth's answer?

A. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

Q. How did Naomi accept this affectionate decision of her daughter?

A. When she saw she was resolved to go with her, she said no more, and they journeyed together to Bethlehem.

Q. How were they received by the citizens of Bethlehem?

A. All the city was moved with sympathy for them, and they queried, Is this Naomi?

Q. How did she answer them?

A. Call me not Naomi, but Mara, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home empty. He hath afflicted me; why call me Naomi?

Q. Do you know the signification of Naomi?

A. It implies beautiful and agreeable, and we can see why the widow would change her name to Mara, which we know means bitter.

Q. What season of the year did Naomi and Ruth return to Judah or Bethlehem-Judah?

A. In the beginning of barley-harvest.

Q. Was barley the first grain that was cut?

A. It became ripe very soon after the rainy season had passed, and was the first cut.

Q. What ceremony attended the cutting of the first sheaf?

A. It was presented as an offering of the first-fruits of the harvest at the altar of God.

Q. How long did the time of harvest continue?

A. Seven weeks—from the Passover until Pentecost.

Q. We have been told the signification of Passover, but not of Pentecost. What is it?

A. Pentecost signifies the fiftieth; the He-

brews call it the Feast of Weeks, because it was kept seven weeks after the Passover.

Q. Was the harvest season a joyful one?

A. It is represented as a season of great pleasure. The master was seen in the midst of the field with his servants and children, all pursuing their work diligently and cheerfully.

Q. Did the maidens join them?

A. They came forth also, and lent their assistance to the general work.

Q. What was required of the Jewish farmer in relation to cutting his grain and gleaning his fields?

A. He was required not to cut the grain in the corners of his fields, but to leave it for the poor; and when he gleaned his fields, he was not to forget the stranger.

Q. Can you repeat the statute in relation to it?

A. "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy land, neither shalt thou gather the gleaning of thy harvest. Thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger."

Q. To whose field did Ruth go to glean?

A. Ruth went to the field of a kinsman of her father-in-law, a mighty man of wealth, named Boaz.

Q. Did she ask her mother if she should go?

A. She said to her mother, Let me go and glean ears of corn after him in whose eyes I shall find grace; and her mother said, Go, my daughter.

Q. What did Ruth mean by finding grace in the eyes of a man?

A. It was a common expression in those days, and simply meant, with whom she should find favor, or who might allow her to glean in his field.

Q. Did she not know that Boaz was a kinsman?

A. It does not appear that she knew where she should glean, or anything about Boaz; for it is written, And her *hap* was, to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

Q. Boaz was said to be a man of wealth; did not the whole field belong to him?

A. In that day there were large tracts of land owned by different proprietors within one enclosure; and we can therefore perceive how Ruth might *happen* to glean, without knowing it, on a part of the field belonging to Boaz.

Q. Was Boaz in the field when Ruth first entered it?

A. He was not; but she was gleaning after the reapers when Boaz came from Bethlehem.

Q. What was Boaz's salutation to the reapers?

A. The Lord be with you; and they answered, The Lord bless thee.

Q. Did he perceive the maiden?

A. He inquired of the servants who were with the reapers, "Whose damsel is this?"

Q. Did they know who she was?

A. They told him, she was the Moabitish stranger; and that she had asked permission of the reapers to glean after them; and that she had continued from the morning until now.

Q. Did Boaz then address Ruth kindly?

A. Boaz spoke to Ruth and said, Hearest thou not, my daughter; go not to glean in another field, but abide here with my maidens, and go after them in the field that they reap.

Q. Did he give his young men a charge respecting her?

A. He told his reapers not to molest her, and said to Ruth, When thou art thirsty, go to the vessels and drink of the water which the young men have drawn.

Q. Was Ruth moved by the kindness of her kinsman?

A. She fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground, and said, Why shouldst thou take knowledge of me, being a stranger?

Q. Frequent allusion is made in the Old Testament to persons bowing themselves to the earth in the presence of others; was it a prevailing custom?

A. It seems to have been common to show different degrees of respect to different persons, according to their rank and importance, by bending the body in a greater or less degree.

Q. What was the manner of expressing these degrees of respect?

A. Simply to bow the head was mere common civility that marked no particular regard, while to curve the body low down, signified considerable reverence, and to throw it entirely down, with the face upon the ground, was the greatest homage.

Q. Was not this last attitude assumed in the worship of the great I AM?

A. It was; and therefore the same term is sometimes used to express both actions. The language of Scripture to *worship* another, means only to show him the greatest respect by an act of profound obeisance.

Q. What salutation accompanied these positions of the body?

A. The common phrases among the Jews at meeting with friends and at parting with them, were of a religious character. "Be thou blessed of Jehovah;" "The blessing of Jehovah be upon thee;" "God be with thee;" were the forms in ancient times; and perhaps a still more universal expression was, "Peace be with you."

Q. Is this custom or salutation continued?

A. We are told that the latter expression of "Peace be with you," is general in the Eastern countries to this day, and in some parts of the East the salutations are tedious, and take up a considerable time. The Arab, when he meets his friend, begins, while he is some distance from him, to make gestures and express satisfaction in seeing him.

Q. What is his form of shaking hands?

A. He grasps his friend by the right hand, and then brings back his own hand to his lips in token of respect.

Q. Does he offer him any other mark of respect?

A. He next proceeds to place his hand gently under the long beard of the other, and honors it with a kiss. He then asks particularly again and again after the health of his family, and repeats over and over the best wishes for his prosperity and peace.

Q. Are they satisfied with a single exchange of this sort?

A. They sometimes repeat this ceremony ten times with little or no variation; so that when a traveller is in haste, it is tiresome and inconvenient.

Q. Was this tedious mode of salutation common, of old?

A. Some such were usual, and we may suppose, that was the reason that the prophet Elisha, when he sent Gehazi in great haste to the house of the Shunamite, said to him, "If thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again."

Q. We left Ruth bowed before Boaz, asking why he was so kind to a stranger; did he give her a reason?

A. He said he had heard all that she had done for her mother-in-law since the death of her husband; how she had left her father and mother and the land of her nativity, and had come to a people she knew not. And he added, Surely a full reward will be given thee by the Lord God of Jacob, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

Q. What request did Ruth then make?

A. That she might continue to be favored by Boaz. She told him he had comforted

her by speaking friendly to her, although she was not like one of his own hand-maidens.

Q. Did he ask her to dine with the reapers and maidens?

A. He said at meal-time, Come eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar; and as she sat by the reapers, he gave her parched corn until her hunger was satisfied.

Q. Would bread dipped in vinegar be palatable?

A. The vinegar here alluded to, no doubt was a weak kind of wine which was very commonly used by laborers, and was called vinegar. The same was drunk by the Roman soldiers, and seems to have been that which was presented in a sponge to the blessed Jesus when he was upon the cross.

Q. After Ruth had left the reapers at dinner-time, what request did Boaz make of them?

A. He commanded his young men to "Let her glean even among the sheaves and to reproach her not, and to let fall some of the handfuls on purpose for her, and to leave them that she might glean them, and to rebuke her not."

Q. How much did Ruth glean on that day?

A. She remained in the field till evening

and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah.

Q. What quantity would that be ?

A. The Ephah is a measure used among the Hebrews, containing three pecks and three pints.

Q. What did Ruth do with the grain ?

A. She took it to her mother-in-law, who queried in whose field she had that day gleaned, and then said, Blessed is he who did take knowledge of thee.

Q. Was Naomi aware that Boaz was a kinsman of her husband ?

A. When Ruth spoke of him, she told her daughter that he was near of kin—one of their next kinsmen.

A. What did Naomi say to Ruth when she told her that Boaz had said she must keep fast by his young men until the end of harvest ?

A. She said, It is good, my daughter, that thou go with his maidens, and that they should not meet thee in any other field ; and Ruth continued to glean with them through both the barley and wheat harvests.

Q. What did Naomi now devise for her faithful daughter-in-law ?

A. In accordance with a custom of very ancient date, and one that had become a

regular statute of the Jewish government, Boaz was regarded by Naomi as the legal claimant of her son's wife, and sent Ruth to Boaz in order that her case might be represented.

Q. What was this custom or statute?

A. It required, in case of a man's dying without an heir or son, that his nearest relation should marry his wife.

Q. What was the origin of this custom?

A. It was considered a great misfortune by this people to be childless. It was an honor to families to have their names handed down in a long succession of sons, from age to age and generation to generation.

Q. Was it from this cause that it was thought rather a disgrace to remain single?

A. This was, we have no doubt, the reason why it was regarded disgraceful to continue in an unmarried state; and as life had no security, it was counted unsafe to delay marriage lest death should cut off the privilege of posterity.

Q. Was Ruth's going to Boaz regarded with favor by him?

A. He assured her he would do what was right, and bade her fear not for all the city of Bethlehem knew that she was a virtuous woman.

Q. Did Boaz acknowledge he was a near kinsman?

A. He said he was, but that there was one nearer than himself; and if he would do the part of a kinsman it would be well, but if not, he would himself act honorably.

Q. Did he send a present to Naomi by Ruth?

A. He measured "six measures" of barley, and gave to Ruth, saying, Go not empty to thy mother-in-law.

Q. Did Naomi appear satisfied with what had been done?

A. She bade her daughter be still, for she was sure, after what Ruth had told her, that Boaz would not rest till the thing was finished.

Q. What means did Boaz take to discover whether the nearer kinsman would conform to the law of the land?

A. He went up to the gate of the city, and waited there until his kinsman came by; he then called to him and asked him to turn aside and sit by him.

Q. Why did Boaz choose the gate of the city as a proper place for their interview?

A. In ancient times the gates of a city were important places. A considerable space was left unoccupied about them, where

markets were held, and goods of all sorts exposed to sale, either in tents or under the open sky.

Q. Would not its publicity render the spot objectionable for the discussion of such business as Boaz had in charge?

A. Here the markets were not only held, but it was also the seat of justice, and the common place of resort, where all matters of law were settled, and public business of every kind was transacted. When Abraham bought a field of the sons of Heth, the bargain was made "at the gate of the city."

Q. What does the expression, "to be crushed in the gate," signify?

A. This Scriptural expression means, to be utterly condemned in judgment by the law; we read in Job, "to open the mouth in the gate; to reprove in the gate; to turn aside judgment in the gate;" all having reference to the courts of justice held at the gates of the city.

Q. Did Boaz invite others to his council?

A. He took ten men, elders of the city, and bade them sit down as witnesses.

Q. Did Boaz proceed at once to speak of Ruth to his kinsman?

A. No; he first told him, that Naomi had a parcel of land, which was their brother

Elimelech's, to sell, and asked if he would redeem or buy it; that he had given him notice before the inhabitants and elders of his people, that he might buy it, as there was none other than themselves to redeem it.

Q. What was the answer of the kinsman?

A. He replied, I will redeem it.

Q. What was Boaz's next proposition?

A. That he should name the day when he would buy it of Naomi, and that he must also buy it of Ruth, the Moabitess, and take her as a wife to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

Q. Was the kinsman willing to do this?

A. He said, I cannot redeem it myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance; redeem thou my right to thyself.

Q. What was the form of redeeming a thing at that time?

A. By way of confirming a bargain, a man took off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor; this was a testimony in Israel. So Boaz' kinsman drew off his shoe and gave it to Boaz, as a seal to the contract.

Q. Did Boaz ask the elders and people to bear witness in the matter?

A. He said unto them, Ye are my witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's of the hand of Naomi.

Q. Did he not mention Ruth?

A. Yes; moreover, said he, I have purchased Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife; that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place; and added, Ye are my witnesses this day.

Q. What was the blessing that these witnesses asked for Ruth?

A. That she might be like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and to Boaz they said, Do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.

Q. What did Boaz and Ruth call their first-born?

A. They called him Obed.

Q. Was Naomi gratified?

A. She took the child and laid it upon her bosom, and became its nurse.

Q. What was said to Naomi of the child?

A. "He shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thy old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loved thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, has borne him."

Q. Who were the descendants of this child?

A. Jesse was the son of Obed, and David was the son of Jesse.

CHAPTER IX.

SAMUEL THE PROPHET — ELI THE PRIEST —
SAMUEL WAS CALLED — THE ARK OF THE
COVENANT — SAMUEL'S SONS MADE JUDGES —
THE PEOPLE DESIRE A KING.

SAMUEL the prophet was the son of Elkanah and Hannah, of the tribe of Levi.

The 2d book of Samuel was not, it is supposed, written by him, as his death is recorded in the 25th chapter of 1st Samuel. It is probable he was the author thus far, but why his name is given to the two books is not known.

From his history we learn, that his father and mother "took him up to the house of God in Shiloh," when very young. His mother brought him to the priest Eli, saying, "I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth, he shall be lent to the Lord."

Hannah then gave forth a hymn of praise and thanksgiving, in which she acknowledged that the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed,—that He had exalted the lowly and brought down

the arrogant. The bows of the mighty men were broken, and they that stumbled were girded with strength.

Eli blessed the parents of Samuel, and they returned to their home in Ramah, leaving their child with the priest.

The affection of Hannah for her son was manifested in her making for him a "little coat" from year to year, which she brought with her when she and her husband came to offer their yearly sacrifices. When Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, he was girded with a linen ephod.

Question. Can you describe an ephod?

Answer. It was an ornamental part of a dress worn by the Hebrew priests; those worn by the high-priests were richly ornamented with needle-work. It was without sleeves, and opened below the arms on each side; one piece covering the front, and the other the back of the body, reaching half-way to the knees, and was fastened on the shoulders by golden buckles set with gems. It was worn over the tunic.

Q. What is a tunic?

A. A tunic is a garment that was worn by both sexes in ancient Rome, and in the East; it reached below the knee.

Q. Was Samuel a remarkably good child?

A. We may think so; for we read that "he grew and was in favor both with the Lord and with man."

Q. What are we to understand by his ministering unto the Lord before Eli?

A. It was the Jewish custom to have one or more assistant priests, and it is probable that Samuel filled such an office.

Q. Was Eli very old?

A. He was old and his sight was dim, and Samuel remained with him in the temple.

Q. What occurred to Samuel one night after they had retired?

A. Before the lamp of the Lord went out in the temple, where the "Ark of God" was, Eli and Samuel laid down each in his place to sleep; and Samuel heard a voice calling him, which he thought was Eli's voice.

Q. Had Eli called Samuel?

A. Samuel ran to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And Eli said, I called not; lie down again.

Q. Did Samuel lie down again?

A. He laid down, and heard his name called; and he arose again, and went to Eli and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

Q. Did Samuel suspect that it might be the voice of the Lord that was calling him?

A. It is written, that he knew not the Lord, not having had the word of the Lord revealed to him. But Samuel laid down, as Eli told him, and the third time he heard the same call, and went to the priest with the same language, Here am I; for thou didst call me.

Q. Did not Eli perceive that Samuel might be called by the Lord?

A. He did now believe that the Lord had spoken to the child, and bade him go and lie down, and if he was called again, to say, Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.

Q. Are little children called now?

A. The feelings of little children are often *impressed* by the same good Spirit which called Samuel; and if they would listen as he did, they might hear it calling unto them.

Q. Is it in this way that all good people are called?

A. Our heavenly Father speaks to all His children by impression. This is the language of His Spirit, and it makes us sensible of what is right and what is wrong; and it is in this way that He communicates His will to us.

Q. Is this what is called the School of Christ?

A. Yes—Christ is the power and wisdom of God—the Spirit or Light which reveals, not only the will of the Father, but all that we know of heavenly or divine things.

Q. Is this spirit spoken of as a “still, small voice?”

A. It is justly compared to a still, small voice, that is heard in the retirement from all without us.

Q. May we compare this state of quiet to Samuel’s having laid down at night, in the temple, with the lamp burning?

A. It is a beautiful figure of the stillness which is favorable for hearing the voice of the Lord, with the lamp or light of Christ illuminating the soul, which is the temple of God.

Q. If Samuel had always been such a good child, why should he not have known that the Lord was calling him?

A. Children are not always conscious of what it is that is hovering around them, causing them to have good feelings, and may come to their parents as Samuel came to Eli, to know what it is.

Q. After Samuel had lain down, as Eli had instructed him, what did he hear?

A. He heard the voice as before calling, Samuel, Samuel! and he answered, Speak,

for thy servant heareth. He was then told that, as Eli had not restrained his sons and they had done wickedly, that the judgments of the Lord should rest upon his house for the iniquity which Eli knew.

Q. Did Samuel repeat to Eli what had been told him?

A. Samuel feared to speak to Eli of what he had heard, and lay till morning, when he opened the doors of the temple.

Q. Did Eli inquire of Samuel what the Lord had said unto him?

A. He called him, saying, My son, what is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me!

Q. Did he intimate to Samuel that evil might come upon him if he concealed anything?

A. Yes; and it is said that "Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him."

Q. How did Eli receive it?

A. He said, It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.

Q. Did Samuel continue to receive evidences of divine favor?

A. The record says, He grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

Q. Did his fame spread abroad?

A. "All Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord."

Q. Where is it said that the Lord revealed himself to Samuel?

A. In Shiloh.

Q. What does the name Shiloh signify?

A. Shiloh signifies peace, abundance.

Q. What disaster befel the ark of the covenant?

A. The Israelites went out to battle against the Philistines, and they believed that if the ark of the covenant was brought to them that they would be victorious, and the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, took it into the camp.

Q. In what way did the Israelites express their feelings?

A. When the ark came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that "the earth rang."

Q. Did the Philistines wonder what the noise meant?

A. They inquired; and when they heard that the ark was brought into the camp of the Israelites, they were afraid, and said, "God is come into the camp!"

Q. Did they then cease hostilities?

A. No; they seemed the more determined

to overcome Israel, and they succeeded, and took the ark of the covenant by force.

Q. Can you tell us what this ark contained which occasioned it to be so highly valued?

A. The tables of the law were deposited in it.

Q. Can you describe it?

A. This sacred chest, as it was called, is said to have been made of Shittim wood, two cubits and a half in length, and a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high.

Q. What would be its size according to the measure with which we are more familiar?

A. A common cubit is said to be a foot and a half, and the *sacred* cubit a full yard, or two common cubits; we cannot therefore know its exact proportions.

Q. What kind of wood is Shittim wood?

A. Historians tell us, that there is reason to believe that it was the wood of the black Acacia. This tree flourishes in some parts of Egypt, and abundantly through the deserts of Arabia.

Q. What is its size and what are its qualities?

A. It is the size of a large mulberry-tree, with rough bark and spreading branches, well supplied with thorns; the wood is hard, tough, and capable of receiving a very smooth

and beautiful polish. It produces flowers of a pleasant fragrance.

Q. Was the chest or coffer ornamented?

A. "It was covered with plates of gold, and on the top of it all round, ran a kind of gold crown, and two cherubim were over the cover. It had four rings of gold, two on each side, through which staves were put, by which it was carried."

Q. Was Eli troubled, that the ark of the covenant had been removed from the temple?

A. He was greatly troubled, and although he was blind, he went out and sat on a seat by the way-side watching; for it is said, his heart trembled for the ark of God.

Q. How did he hear what had befallen it?

A. A messenger came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes rent and earth upon his head, and when he told what had occurred, "all the city cried out," and Eli inquired what the noise meant.

Q. Did the messenger then come to Eli?

A. He came to Eli and told him that Israel had fled before the Philistines, and that his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

Q. Did he make mention of the ark of the covenant?

A. He told the priest that the ark was taken; and when Eli heard it, he fell from

off his seat backward by the side of the gate, and being an old man and heavy, he broke his neck.

Q. How long had Eli judged Israel?

A. He had been a judge in Israel forty years.

Q. What did the Philistines do with the ark?

A. They brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod, and took it into the house of Dagon.

Q. Who or what was Dagon?

A. An idol worshipped by the Philistines. Dagon, in Hebrew, signifies a large fish.

Q. What is the scriptural account of Dagon after the ark of the covenant was placed beside this idol?

A. That when the people went into the house early in the morning, they found Dagon had fallen upon his face before the ark of the Lord, and that his head and both his hands were cut off, and only the stump of Dagon was left.

Q. What effect had this upon those who saw it?

A. It is written that neither the priests, nor any that went into Dagon's house, would tread upon the threshold afterward.

Q. Were the people of Ashdod anxious to have the ark taken from them?

A. When they saw what had been done, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall

not abide with us, for His hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

Q. What did they purpose to do with it?

A. They gathered all the lords of the Philistines, and inquired of them what should be done with it; and they answered, Let it be carried to Gath.

Q. Was it taken to Gath?

A. It was taken there; but trouble came upon that city, and it was removed to Ekron. The people of Ekron were not willing to have it, and said, Send it away to its own place.

Q. What was the advice of the "priests and diviners," whom the Philistines consulted?

A. They told them that if they sent it away, not to send it empty, but to return a trespass offering.

Q. What was meant by a trespass offering?

A. The Mosaic law required that, if property had been dishonestly acquired, it should be returned with the addition of one-fifth of its value.

Q. In case the thing stolen could not be returned, what did they do?

A. In cases of theft, the general law was, that double the amount stolen should be restored;—if a sheep, or an ox, for instance,

had been stolen and slain, the restoration for the first was to be fourfold — for the second, fivefold.

Q. But what was done if he who had taken an article was unable to pay the price?

A. When the thief was unable to make restitution, he was sold, with his wife and children, into bondage.

Q. Did the government receive part of the fines?

A. No; they were paid to the injured person.

Q. What restitution did the priests and lords propose should be made to the Israelites?

A. Jewels of gold were to be sent with the ark; and the ark was to be placed on a new cart drawn by two kine which had never been yoked, and their calves were to be left at home; and the coffer containing the jewels of gold was to be placed beside the ark on the cart; and they were to go by the way of the coast of Beth-shemesh.

Q. Where was Beth-shemesh situated?

A. It was a city of Judah, thirty miles west from Jerusalem, given to the Levites.

Q. Was there a place of the same name in Egypt?

A. Yes; and the Greek signification of

the name is, the City of the Sun. This was the ancient seat of the Egyptian worship of the sun.

Q. Was the ark of the covenant carried upon the cart by Beth-shemesh?

A. It is written, that the kine took the straight way to Beth-shemesh, and turned neither to the right hand nor the left, lowing as they went; and five lords of the Philistines accompanied the ark to the borders of the land.

Q. Did the inhabitants receive it?

A. They were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley, and when they saw the ark they were rejoiced.

Q. What did they do?

A. They brought it into the field of Joshua, a Bethshemite, where there was a great stone, upon which they put the coffer of jewels, and they broke up the cart, and offered the kine as a burnt-offering unto the Lord.

Q. What kind of animals are kine?

A. Kine is the plural of cow.

Q. To whom did the Bethshemites send word that they had possession of the ark?

A. They sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, Come down and fetch it up to you.

Q. For what is Kirjath-jearim noted?

A. As the city where the ark was lodged many years in the house of Abinadab. Jerusalem, where the ark was afterwards taken by David, is about nine miles distant from Kirjath-jearim.

Q. Who was selected as suitable to take charge of the ark?

A. Eleazar the son of Abinadab was "sanctified" to keep the ark of the Lord

Q. How long was it in Eleazar's charge?

A. Twenty years; during which there was great lamentation in Israel.

Q. What did Samuel advise them to do, in order that they might be delivered from the Philistine troubles?

A. He told them to put away their strange gods, and return unto the Lord with all their hearts, that they might serve Him only, and He would deliver them from the hand of the Philistines.

Q. Did they take heed to Samuel's counsel?

A. They put away Baalim and Ashtoroth, and served the Lord only.

Q. What were Baalim and Ashtoroth?

A. Baalim signifies images or statues of Baal, a god among the Phœnicians; and

Ashtoreth, of which Ashtoroth is the plural, was a goddess of the same people.

Q. How came they among the Israelites?

A. The worship of these idols was introduced to a considerable extent in Israel.

Q. Did the Israelites appeal to Samuel for help?

A. They said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God, for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

Q. Was the prayer of Samuel heard?

A. Samuel cried unto the Lord, and He heard him, and the Philistines were subdued and came no more into the coast of Israel during the life of Samuel.

Q. Where did Samuel set a stone in commemoration of this deliverance?

A. He set a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

Q. Were the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel restored to them?

A. All the cities were restored from Ekron even unto Gath, and there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Q. Did Samuel continue to judge Israel?

A. Samuel went from year to year in circuit to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

Q. Where was his home?

A. His home was in Ramah, where he built an altar unto the Lord.

Q. Did Samuel make judges of his sons?

A. As he grew old, he made his sons judges in Israel.

Q. Did they walk in the footsteps of their father?

A. His "sons walked not in his ways, and turned aside after lucre, and took bribes and perverted judgment."

Q. What proposition did the elders of Israel make to Samuel, in order to relieve themselves of these unrighteous judges?

A. "The elders gathered themselves together and came to Ramath and said unto Samuel, Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all nations."

Q. Did Samuel unite with this proposal?

A. It displeased him when they asked for a king, and he prayed unto the Lord.

Q. What was he instructed to say to the people?

A. He was told not to oppose them, but to show them what a king would require of them; that they would have to give him a part of all their possession, and that he would appoint their sons and daughters to

do his bidding, and that they would be his servants.

Q. After being told this, did they still desire a king?

A. Yes; although Samuel told them they would regret it in the day when all these things should come to pass, yet they said, Nay, but we will have a king.

Q. Did Samuel hearken unto their voice and make them a king?

A. The Lord said unto Samuel, Make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go every man unto his own city.

Q. What did the prophet propose to do?

A. He had been shown whom he should make king, and he was to wait until the young man should come to him.

Q. Who was the young man?

A. His name was Saul, and he was the son of Kish, a mighty man of power, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Q. What is said of Saul?

A. "That he was a goodly and choice young man, and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he. From his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the people."

CHAPTER X.

SAUL — SAUL ANOINTED KING — SAMUEL'S INTEGRITY — AMALEK — DISOBEDIENCE OF SAUL — DAVID ANOINTED KING.

Question. Upon what errand was Saul sent by his father?

Answer. The asses of Kish, his father, were lost, and he told Saul to take one of the servants with him, and go see if he could find them.

Q. Were they successful?

A. After looking for them in many places and not finding them, Saul proposed returning, lest his father should be more concerned about them, than the animals.

Q. Did the servant approve of their returning?

A. He proposed that they should first consult a man of God who lived in that city, and who was an honorable man; and it was said, that all things which he said came to pass, and he might perhaps tell them which way to go.

Q. Why did Saul feel an objection to going to the seer?

A. He said that the bread was spent in their vessels, and they had no present to take to him; but he queried, What have we?

Q. Had the servant something in his possession?

A. He said that he had at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver that he would give the "man of God" to tell them their way.

Q. How much would the fourth part of a shekel be?

A. About twelve and a half cents; the value of a shekel is computed by some to be fifty, and by others, sixty cents.

Q. What reply did Saul make to his servant?

A. He replied, Well said; come let us go: and they went to the seer.

Q. Does seer mean the same as prophet?

A. Yes; it implies the same. In the early ages, when a man wished to know the divine will, he would say, Come let us go to the seer; but the term prophet was substituted for that of seer.

Q. With whom did they meet on their way to Samuel?

A. As they went up the hill, they met young maidens going out to draw water, and they asked if the seer was there.

Q. Could they tell them?

A. They said, He is ; make haste, for about this time he will go up to the high place, to bless the sacrifice before the people will eat, and you will be likely to meet him.

Q. Did they meet him ?

A. They did ; and when Samuel saw Saul, he knew it was he that should be anointed king.

Q. Did Saul speak to Samuel ?

A. Saul drew near to Samuel *in the gate*, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is.

Q. What was Samuel's answer ?

A. I am the seer ; go before me to the high place, and ye shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will tell thee all in my heart, and will let thee go.

Q. Did Saul inquire about the asses ?

A. Samuel told them that the asses which were lost three days ago were found, and they need not be troubled about them.

Q. Did Samuel intimate to Saul that he was a favorite among the people ?

A. He said to Saul, On whom is all the desire of Israel ? Is it not on thee and on all thy father's house ?

Q. How did Saul receive this ?

A. Saul replied, Am I not a Benjamite of the smallest of the tribes of Israel ? and my

family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin, wherefore speakest thou so to me?

Q. Was Saul especially noticed by Samuel at the dinner-hour?

A. He brought Saul and his servant into the parlor, and made them sit in the chief place among those who were bidden, of whom there were about thirty persons.

Q. Had Saul a particular dish brought him?

A. Samuel directed the cook to bring to Saul that which had been set apart for him; and he said to Saul, Eat, for it has been kept for thee since I invited the people.

Q. After they had dined, did Samuel talk with Saul?

A. After dinner they came down from the high place, and the prophet took Saul upon the top of the house and communed with him.

Q. Did he then acquaint him with his purpose to make him king?

A. Not at that time; but in the morning they arose early, and Samuel called Saul and said, "Up, that I may send thee away;" and Saul arose and they went out together.

Q. Did Samuel then anoint Saul?

A. He bade Saul send his servant before them; and after the man had passed on, he

said to Saul, Stand thou still a while, that I may show thee the word of God.

Q. What was Samuel's next act?

A. He took a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?

Q. Did Samuel then tell Saul what should occur through the day?

A. He said to Saul, that, after he left him, he would meet two men by Rachel's sepulchre, and they would tell him that the asses which he went to seek were found, and that his father was sorrowing for his son.

Q. Was he to meet other persons on his way?

A. Yes; three men who were going to Bethel, and they would offer him two loaves of bread, which he should receive at their hand.

Q. What should he meet with after that?

A. As he came to the hill of God, where there was a garrison of Philistines, he would meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp before them, and they would prophesy.

Q. What was Saul to do when he met the prophets?

A. The Spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and he should prophesy with them, and he should be turned into another man.

Q. Where was Saul to go after this?

A. He was to go to Gilgal, and wait for Samuel seven days; and when he came, he would tell him what to do.

Q. Did these things come to pass, as Samuel prophesied?

A. All these signs came to pass that day.

Q. Was Saul, when among the prophets, recognized by any who had previously known him?

A. He was recognized; and the people said, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?

Q. What is said of this last query?

A. That it has passed into a proverb.

Q. After he was done prophesying and had come down from the high place, whom did he see?

A. His uncle, who inquired where Saul and his servant had been.

Q. Did Saul tell him?

A. He told them that they went to seek the asses, and when they could not find them they went to Samuel.

Q. Did the uncle want to know what the prophet said to them?

A. He said to Saul, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you.

Q. Did Saul tell him all?

A. He told him that Samuel had assured them that the asses were found; but of the matter of the kingdom he said nothing.

Q. Did Samuel tell the Israelites he had chosen them a king?

A. He called the people together at Mizpeh, and told them, as they rejected the counsel he had given, and would have a king, they must present themselves before the Lord by their tribes and by their thousands.

Q. For what purpose?

A. To see who would be chosen king. After they were gathered, the tribe of Benjamin was selected,—and then the family of Matri, and out of that family Saul the son of Kish.

Q. Was Saul present?

A. When they sought him they could not find him for some time, for he had hidden himself.

Q. After he was found, what was done with him?

A. He was presented to the people, and Samuel said to them, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen; there is none like him

among all the people. And the people shouted 'God save the king.' "

Q. Did Samuel establish laws for the government of the kingdom?

A. He wrote the form of government in a book, and it is said, laid it up before the Lord.

Q. Were all the people satisfied with the new king?

A. The sons of Belial despised Saul, and said, How shall this man save us? and they brought him no presents; but Saul held his peace.

Q. Had Samuel another interview with the people collectively?

A. He addressed all Israel, and brought before them his course of conduct from his childhood, unto that day when he was old and gray-headed; and he told them, if they felt he had defrauded or oppressed any, or if he had received a bribe to blind his eyes, he wished them to bear witness against him, and if he had done wrong he would make amends for it.

Q. How did the people answer this appeal?

A. "They said, Thou hast not defrauded us nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand."

Q. Did Samuel allude to their king?

A. He said, Behold the king whom you have desired. If ye will fear the Lord and serve him and obey his voice, and not rebel against His commandments, and also obey the king that ruleth over you, the Lord will be with you.

Q. If they turned aside, what would happen to them?

A. Both they and their king should be destroyed.

Q. Did Samuel assure them of his continued interest?

A. He told them he would continue to teach them the good and right way, and to pray for them.

Q. What compensation did he ask for this?

A. That they should fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all their heart, and consider what great things He had done for them.

Q. What was Samuel's advice to Saul?

A. He said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over Israel; now hearken unto the voice of the words of the Lord: go smite Amalek, and all that he has; spare nothing.

Q. Did Saul obey this commandment?

A. Saul went out against Amalek; but

instead of destroying all, as he had been directed, he saved Agag the king, and the best of the sheep and the oxen, and all that was good; but that which was vile and refuse, they cast off utterly.

Q. When Samuel again saw Saul, what was Saul's greeting?

A. Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

Q. Did Samuel make a reply?

A. Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

Q. Did Saul answer this question?

A. Saul told Samuel they were brought from the Amalekites; the people had spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord, and the rest had been utterly destroyed.

Q. Did Samuel reprove Saul?

A. He said to Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me to-night.

Q. Was Saul willing to hear?

A. Saul was willing, and said to Samuel, Say on; and the prophet continued, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king?

and he then sent thee on a journey to destroy the Amalekites; wherefore didst thou not obey His voice, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?

Q. Did Saul attempt to justify himself?

A. He replied, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone the way which He sent me,—have made Agag a prisoner; and the people reserved the chief of the things which would have been utterly destroyed, the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord in Gilgal.

Q. What did Samuel say to this?

A. Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying his voice? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams?

Q. Is there special teaching in this account?

A. There is deep instruction to be gathered from it. In another place we have alluded to Amalek as representing the self-will of man, and by carrying out the figure we can perceive its application.

Q. What would Agag the king represent?

A. The ruling spirit of the selfish dominion.

Q. What the sheep and oxen which were reserved, with the chief of all that was good?

A. These may represent those things which are especially prized, and some of them may

seem innocent and useful, but if we are commanded to remove or destroy them, we are to do so unreservedly.

Q. What would be the probable consequence of our not complying with what *we* might deem a rigid command?

A. Similar to Saul's; an evidence that we had disobeyed the divine command; and we should doubtless be reminded, that "obedience was better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Q. Did Saul seem sensible of his error?

A. Saul acknowledged that he had sinned and transgressed the commandment of the Lord.

Q. What was the reason he gave for so doing?

A. That he feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

Q. Did he wish Samuel to pardon the sin, that he might worship with Samuel?

A. He desired this, but Samuel said, No, and turned to go away, saying, Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

Q. Did Saul attempt to detain him?

A. He laid hold upon the skirt of Samuel's mantle, and rent it.

Q. Did Samuel feel this circumstance to be significant of the state of the kingdom?

A. Samuel said to Saul, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou.

Q. What did he mean by the kingdom being given to another?

A. Saul having lost the state of "littleness in his own eyes," in which he was anointed king, he was no longer worthy of the honor; and another, more humble, should rule over Israel.

Q. Did Samuel see Saul again?

A. He came no more to see him, but he continued to mourn for him.

Q. Was Samuel reminded he had another duty?

A. The language to Samuel was, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons.

Q. Did Samuel fear to go?

A. He said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me.

Q. Was it told him what he should do to avoid this danger?

A. He was directed by the Lord to take a heifer, and call Jesse to the sacrifice, and it should then be shown him what he should do.

Q. What did the elders of Bethlehem say to Samuel?

A. When the elders of the town saw him, they trembled, and said, Comest thou peaceably? Samuel answered, Peaceably, I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord.

Q. What did he direct them to do?

A. To sanctify or wash themselves, and come with him to the sacrifice.

Q. Were Jesse and his sons there?

A. Yes; Samuel invited them to the sacrifice.

Q. Did the prophet at once select him whom he was to anoint king?

A. Samuel, when he saw the eldest, said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before me; but he was reminded that he was not to judge from the countenance nor stature, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh at the heart.

Q. Were the other sons brought before Samuel?

A. One after another passed before him, but to all was the same answer given, Neither hath the Lord chosen this.

Q. How many did Jesse call?

A. He caused seven to come before the prophet; and when Samuel felt that he could not anoint any one of them, he asked Jesse if all his children were there.

Q. What was the answer of Jesse?

A. There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold he keepeth sheep.

Q. Did Samuel request that he should be sent for?

A. Yes; he said to Jesse, Send and fetch him; we will not sit down till he come.

Q. Was he brought?

A. A youth of a ruddy and beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon, stood before the prophet.

Q. What was the command Samuel received?

A. Arise, anoint him, for this is he; and Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the spirit of the Lord came, or rested upon David from that day forward.

CHAPTER XI.

SAUL IN TROUBLE—DAVID—GOLIAH—GOLIAH'S DEATH—JONATHAN—DAVID'S MARRIAGE—HIS FLIGHT FROM SAUL—AHIMELECH—ABI-ATHAR.

Question. What is said of Saul's troubles?

Answer. That the spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit troubled him.

Q. What proposition did Saul's servants make to him, in order to relieve them?

A. That they should seek out a man who was a cunning player on the harp, and when Saul felt that the evil spirit was upon him, this man should play for him.

Q. Did Saul like this idea?

A. He bade them to provide one that could play well, and to bring him.

Q. Where did they find one?

A. They had seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, that was cunning in playing; a valiant man, and prudent in business as well as being comely in person, and the Lord was

with him, and they would like Saul to see him.

Q. Did Saul send for the son of Jesse?

A. He sent messengers to Jesse, saying, Send me thy son David, who is with the sheep.

Q. Did Jesse comply with Saul's request?

A. Yes; he took an ass laden with bread and a bottle of wine and a kid, and sent them by David to Saul.

Q. Was Saul pleased with David?

A. He loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer.

Q. What request did he make of Jesse?

A. That he would allow David to remain with him, for he had found favor in his sight.

Q. What office did David fill?

A. When Saul felt troubled and depressed David took his harp and played for him, and Saul was refreshed by it.

Q. Did the Israelites and Philistines renew their conflict?

A. They gathered their armies for battle; and there was one among the Philistines of gigantic size and strength, whose coat of mail weighed five thousand shekels of brass, and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and he defied the armies of Israel.

Q. Did he request to meet one of the Israelites in single combat?

A. He called to the Israelites, and said, Choose you a man, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, then we will be your servants, but if I prevail against him, then you shall be our servants.

Q. What was the name of this giant?

A. Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span, or nine feet six inches.

Q. Were the Israelites intimidated by him?

A. They were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Q. Did any of the sons of Jesse join Saul's army?

A. Three of them went to battle, but David returned to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

Q. How long did the Philistine present himself for combat?

A. For forty days, morning and evening, he drew near the Israelites.

Q. Was Jesse uneasy about his sons?

A. He was thoughtful about them, and sent David to the camp with parched corn and bread for them, and to see how they fared.

Q. In what condition did David find the Israelites?

A. They were on the eve of a battle; army was arrayed against army, and Goliath vaunting himself before them.

Q. Were his brethren pleased to see him?

A. When David inquired of the Israelites, who were in great fear of the giant, who he was, and what was said respecting the man who should overcome him, Eliab, David's eldest brother, was greatly displeased.

Q. What did he say to David?

A. He spoke reprovingly, and said, Why camest thou hither, and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thy heart, for thou hast come down to see the battle.

Q. Did David manifest anger at this rebuke?

A. He merely said to his brother, What have I done; is there not a cause? and then turned from him to another to inquire further about Goliath.

Q. Did Saul send for David?

A. When Saul heard that David was there, he sent for him.

Q. Did David tell Saul that he was willing to go against the Philistine?

A. He said, Let no man's heart fail because of the Philistine; I will go and fight with him.

Q. Was Saul willing David should go?

A. He told David he was not able; for he was but a youth, and Goliath had been a man of war from his youth.

Q. What proof did David give of his valor?

A. David told Saul of his encounter with the lion and the bear, which came into his father's fold and took a lamb out of the flock.

Q. Did he overcome the lion and the bear?

A. Yes; he slew them both, and he said, This uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.

Q. Where did David place his confidence?

A. He believed that He who delivered him from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear, would deliver him out of the hand of this Philistine.

Q. After hearing this, what did Saul say to David?

A. He said, Go; and the Lord be with thee.

Q. Did he offer David his armor?

A. He clothed him with it; he put an helmet of brass upon his head and armed him with a coat of mail; and David girded his sword upon his armor.

Q. Did he go forth thus equipped?

A. He attempted to go; but found he could

not; and said to Saul that he could not go with these, for he had not proved them; and he put them off.

Q. What preparation did David make to meet Goliath?

A. He took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had. His sling was in his hand, and he went to meet the Philistine.

Q. Did the Philistine advance toward David?

A. He drew near to David, and the man that bore the shield, went before him.

Q. How did he feel when he saw David?

A. He disdained him for his youth, and said, Am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves; and added, Come to me and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field.

Q. What was David's answer?

A. Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts.

Q. What did David do when the Philistine came towards him?

A. When Goliath drew near, he put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and

slung it; and it struck the giant in the forehead, and he fell to the earth.

Q. What became of the Philistines after Goliath was slain?

A. When they saw their champion was dead, they fled.

Q. Did Israel pursue them?

A. Israel arose with a shout and pursued them to the gates of Ekron, after which they returned and spoiled their tents.

Q. Is the history of David and Goliath susceptible of spiritual interpretation?

A. We think it one of the most forcible illustrations of the advantage to be derived from a perfect trust in the divine power, that we have upon record.

Q. To what may Goliath be likened?

A. To a strong self-will, which defies or rebels against the divine will.

Q. What spirit would David represent?

A. An innocent and child-like spirit, which, trusting alone in the parental arm, is enabled to overcome an enemy even of gigantic proportions, with as simple a weapon as a smooth stone from the brook.

Q. To what may the armor of Saul be compared?

A. To the most perfect defence which man could invent for his own protection.

Q. Would it have been unsafe for David to have trusted in it?

A. It probably would have proved as ineffectual as the coat of mail worn by the Philistine. In the remark of David that he "had not proved" Saul's armor, there is deep instruction.

Q. What does it imply?

A. That David knew not the efficiency of that in which Saul trusted, for he had not proved it; but in the power which had enabled him to overcome the lion and the bear, he had full confidence.

Q. Are there dispositions in the human mind, which may be compared to the lion and the bear?

A. In the book of Isaiah, the varied propensities of our nature are beautifully represented by that state in which the lion and the lamb can lie down together, and a little child could lead them.

Q. Is there anything said about the bear?

A. Yes; "the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

Q. What is designed to be conveyed by these figures?

A. They describe a state of spiritual harmony in which every faculty of the mind is

brought under heavenly dominion, or the influence of divine love. This exalted condition is elsewhere spoken of as a mountain. "He that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.

Q. Are there other texts in which the holy mountain is alluded to?

A. Yes; a number, and none perhaps, more encouraging than that in the chapter already referred to in Isaiah, where it says, "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain."

Q. Did Saul send for David, when he was told that he had slain Goliath?

A. He had before inquired who "the stripling" was, and when he was told it was David, he sent for him.

Q. Did David return to his father's house after his interview with the king?

A. No; Saul was not willing he should go, and took him into his own service.

Q. Had Saul a son?

A. He had a son named Jonathan, who loved David so much that it was said, "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

Q. How did Jonathan manifest his love for David?

A. We are told that they made a covenant because of their love; by which we understand that a mutual feeling existed between them,—and Jonathan placed upon David his own princely apparel, and gave him his sword, bow, and girdle.

Q. Did David accompany Saul when he left home?

A. Wherever Saul went, David was with him, and behaved so wisely, that he was a favorite, not only with Saul's servants, but with all the people.

Q. What occasioned Saul to be displeased as they were returning from the overthrow of the Philistines?

A. The women came out from the cities with singing and instruments of music to meet them, and said, one to another, Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

Q. Did Saul endeavor to take David's life?

A. He cast a javelin at him twice, which David avoided; and this caused Saul to fear him, because he believed that the Lord was with him.

Q. Did he wish David to become his son-in-law?

A. He proposed it, but for the purpose of

intrigue. He thought through his daughter's influence to destroy David.

Q. Did the people continue to respect David?

A. David acted with so much propriety in his intercourse with the people, that all Israel and Judah loved him.

Q. Was Saul still bent upon taking his life?

A. He spoke to Jonathan and all his servants, requesting them to take the life of David.

Q. Did Jonathan plead the cause of his beloved friend?

A. He reminded his father that in all things David had served him faithfully, and added, "Let not the king sin against his servant David."

Q. Did David after this marry the daughter of the king?

A. Yes; although, when Saul first proposed that he should marry his daughter, he replied, "Seemeth it to you to be a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man and am lightly esteemed;" yet when he discovered that Michal loved him, they were married.

Q. Did Saul now change his purpose toward David?

A. No; but sent men to David's house to watch him by night, and to take his life in the morning.

Q. Were they successful in carrying out their wicked design?

A. They failed to do so,—David's wife being made acquainted with their evil intentions, let him down through a window, and he escaped.

Q. What did Michal say to the men when they came for her husband?

A. She deceived them by putting an image in the bed, and placing "a pillow of goat's-hair for his bolster and covering it with a cloth;" and when they came to take David, she said he was sick.

Q. What became of David?

A. He went to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that had befallen him.

Q. Did Saul pursue David?

A. He sent men in pursuit of him, but when they heard the prophets speaking, they remained with them.

Q. Did he send others?

A. Yes; to the third time; and when he found they all stayed, he went himself; and the spirit of prophesy fell upon him, and he tarried with Samuel all that day and all

that night, so that it was said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Q. Did David continue his flight?

A. He fled from Naioth and came to Jonathan, and asked him what he had done, that his father should seek to take his life.

Q. Was Jonathan able to tell him?

A. Jonathan said, "God forbid, thou shalt not die." He could not believe that his father wished to take David's life, and assured him that whatsoever his soul desired, he would do for him.

Q. What did David request of Jonathan?

A. To discover whether his father was determined to take his life; and they agreed between themselves how this should be effected. David was to absent himself for three days, when Jonathan should acquaint him with what he knew.

Q. Was their plan carried out?

A. It was; and Jonathan had to convey the sad intelligence to David, that his life was in danger.

Q. Did he propose that David should go away?

A. They kissed one another, and wept with one another; and Jonathan said to David, Go in peace.

Q. What course did David take?

A. He went to the priest Ahimelech, who was frightened to see David alone, but David made him believe that he was there on a secret embassy, and asked him what he had under his hand.

Q. What had the priest under his hand?

A. It was bread, and David said, Give me five loaves, or, what thou hast there.

Q. Was the priest willing to do so?

A. He told David, that there was no common bread there, but the bread under his hand was hallowed.

Q. Did David get the hallowed bread?

A. Yes; as the priest had none except the shew-bread, which had been removed from its usual place that day, to make room for the hot bread, he gave it to David.

Q. Why was the bread called "shew-bread?"

A. Shew-bread was bread offered every Sabbath, to the Most High on the golden table which stood in the holy place.

Q. Was it generally partaken of?

A. It could not be lawfully eaten by any, except the priests.

Q. Did Ahimelech hesitate to give it to David on that account?

A. It is presumed that was the reason; but in David's necessity, he ate it without scruple.

Q. What else did David inquire for?

A. He asked Ahimelech if he had not a spear or a sword.

Q. Had the *priest* a sword?

A. He said the sword of the Philistine whom David slew was there, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod; if he would take that, he could have it.

Q. Did David accept it?

A. He said, There is none like that; give it to me; and David arose and fled for fear of Saul.

Q. Where did David secrete himself from Saul?

A. In the cave of Adullam.

Q. Was he alone in this cave?

A. No; every one that was in distress, every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered around him, till there were about four hundred men.

Q. Did David's family know where he was?

A. David went to Mizpeh, to the king of Moab, and asked that his father and mother might be allowed to come to him.

Q. Did the king grant this request?

A. He consented; and David's parents remained with him all the time he was in this place of concealment.

Q. Who advised David to go forth and remain no longer in the cave?

A. A prophet named Gad advised him to go into the land of Judah; and David went into the forest of Hareth.

Q. Did Saul hear of David and the people who were with him?

A. Saul had been abiding with his spear in his hand; and when he heard of David, and the people who had connected themselves with him, he asked those by whom he was surrounded, to consider whether the son of Jesse could make them captains over thousands, and over hundreds, and give them fields and vineyards.

Q. Why did the king ask this question?

A. We may believe that he feared that these men would also unite with David; and he wanted to remind them that he had it in his power to confer greater favors upon them than the "son of Jesse."

Q. Did he give any evidence that he suspected their fidelity?

A. He queried if Jonathan and they had not formed a league with David, and had concealed it from him.

Q. Was Saul told that Ahimelech, the priest, had furnished David with bread and with the sword of Goliah?

A. He was given this information by an Edomite; and he at once sent for Ahimelech and those of his house, to appear before him.

Q. Did he accuse them of conspiring with David against him?

A. Such was the accusation; but Ahimelech asserted their innocence, and asked, how they could suspect any wrong; for who was so faithful among all Saul's servants as David;—he went at the king's bidding, and was honorable in all his house; and, moreover, he was his son-in-law.

Q. Was Saul's anger pacified?

A. No. Saul ordered the footmen who stood about him to slay the priests; but the servants of the king would not put forth a hand against them.

Q. To whom did Saul next apply?

A. To Doeg, the Edomite, who had first informed against Ahimelech, he said, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests.

Q. Did Doeg obey him?

A. It is said that he slew on that day four-score and five persons who wore a linen ephod.

Q. Did any of Ahimelech's family escape?

A. One son named Abiathar escaped, and came to David, who said to him, Remain with me, and fear not, for he that seeketh

thy life seeketh my life; but with me thou shalt be safe.

Q. Did David remain in the forest of Har-eth?

A. No; David did not remain long in any place. Saul continued his opposition to him, and there arose factions of a serious character.

Q. Did Jonathan continue faithful to his friend David?

A. Jonathan came to David in the wood, and encouraged him, saying, Fear not, for Saul my father shall not find thee. Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth.

Q. What did Saul direct should be done in order to find David?

A. He commanded those who were faithful to him to take knowledge of every lurking-place where David could hide; and to come and tell him, and he would pursue and search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah.

CHAPTER XII.

SAUL IN THE CAVE — DAVID AND SAUL —
DEATH OF SAMUEL — THE CRUISE AND
SPEAR — SAUL'S DEATH — ISHBOSHETH — DA-
VID REANOINTED KING — NATHAN — ME-
PHISOBETH — ZIBA — BATHSHEBA — SOLO-
MON — ABSALOM.

Question. What turned Saul's attention from David?

Answer. The tidings that the Philistines had invaded the land.

Q. Where did David now intrench himself?

A. In the strongholds of En-gedi.

Q. After Saul returned from following the Philistines, was he told where David could be found?

A. Some one informed him that David was in the wilderness of En-gedi, and he took three thousand chosen men out of Israel, and went to seek David and his men, "upon the rocks of the wild goats."

Q. Did anything remarkable occur to Saul?

A. He went into a cave to rest, and David

and his men were "in the sides" of the same cave. Those who were with David told him that his enemy had been delivered into his hand, and he could do with him as he pleased.

Q. Did David feel like avenging himself?

A. He replied to his men, "God forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against Saul, seeing he is the Lord's anointed." He arose, however, and cut off the skirt of the king's robe privately

Q. Did he restrain his men from injuring Saul?

A. He suffered them not to injure Saul.

Q. Did Saul discover David while he was in the cave?

A. He did not; but after Saul left the cave, David followed him, crying, My lord, the king; and when Saul heard him, he turned toward him.

Q. What did David do?

A. He stooped with his face to the earth, and queried with Saul, why he believed men when they said to him, "David seeketh thy hurt."

Q. Did David tell him his life had been in his hand?

A. He said to Saul, Some of my men bade me kill thee, but mine eye spared thee, and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed.

Q. Did he show Saul the skirt of the robe which he had cut off?

A. He showed it to him as an evidence, that there "was neither evil nor transgression" with him, or he might have killed him; and queried, Why huntest thou my soul to take it?

Q. What proverb did David quote?

A. "Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked," but my hand said, David shall not be upon thee; but let the Lord be judge between thee and me, and let Him see and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thy hand.

Q. What was Saul's reply?

A. After David had finished speaking, Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? and he wept aloud, and then added, Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

Q. Did he allude to David's being made king?

A. He said, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand.

Q. What request did he make of David?

A. That he should not cut off his seed, nor destroy his name out of his father's house.

Q. Did David promise that he would not?

A. He made such a covenant with Saul; and Saul went home, and David returned to his hold.

Q. What occurred in Israel about this time, which caused great lamentation?

A. Samuel the prophet died, and all Israel gathered to lament him, and they buried him in the city at Ramah.

Q. For what was the period in which Samuel lived, remarkable?

A. The commonwealth of Israel had been converted into a kingdom, and Samuel, the last of the Hebrew judges, had anointed two kings to rule over it.

Q. Did Samuel institute schools for the prophets?

A. It is said that he first established schools for the education of the prophets.

Q. What were the students of these schools called?

A. They were called "sons of prophets," and their teachers were styled "fathers."

Q. Can you tell how the name of scribe originated?

A. It was first given to such as excelled in the use of the pen, but it came in time to mean, learned men.

Q. We have heard that David and Saul

parted under a better feeling than had existed between them; did this continue?

A. No; Saul was incited to again trouble David, and he followed him into the wilderness.

Q. Did he meet with David there?

A. Saul and his men encamped for the night; and as Saul was lying in a trench, with his men all around him, David and Abishai came up, and saw them.

Q. Did Saul know that they were there?

A. No; Saul did not see them. A deep sleep was over the camp, and David entered and took a cruise of water from near the bolster on which Saul rested, and also took his spear which he had stuck in the ground.

Q. What did Abishai, the brother of Joab, wish David to suffer him to do?

A. To strike Saul with his own spear, saying, He would be sure not to strike twice.

Q. What did David say to this proposition?

A. He said to Abishai, Destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?

Q. What did David and Abishai do with the spear and cruise of water?

A. They hasted away without awaking any one, carrying their trophies with them.

Q. How was Saul made acquainted with David's visit?

A. It is written that David went over to the other side and stood on the top of a hill, a great space being between them, and called to Abner, who, it would seem, was Saul's body-guard or chief man.

Q. What did David say to Abner?

A. Art not thou a valiant man, and who is like to thee in Israel, and yet the thing is not good that thou hast done. You are worthy to die in that you have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed.

Q. Did he show Abner the spear and the cruise of water?

A. He said, See where the king's spear and cruise of water are, that were at his bolster.

Q. Did Saul recognize David's voice?

A. He asked the question, Is this thy voice, my son David?

Q. Did David again ask Saul to no longer listen to those who were stirring him up against him?

A. He repeated the request that he had made when they before met; and said, What evil is in my hand that I should be pursued, as one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains!

Q. Did Saul again appear penitent?

A. Saul said, I have sinned; return, my son David, for I will do thee no harm, be-

cause my soul was precious in thine eyes this day.

Q. What did David ask of Saul?

A. He said, Behold the king's spear! let one of the young men come and fetch it; and added, The Lord render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness.

Q. What was Saul's parting salutation?

A. He said, Blessed be thou, my son David; thou shalt do great things, and shalt still prevail!

Q. What were David's feelings?

A. David said in his heart, I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul; and there is nothing better left for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines, and Saul shall despair and seek me no more in any coast of Israel; so I shall escape out of his hand.

Q. What became of Saul?

A. He was at war with the Philistines, in which the Israelites were defeated; his three sons were killed, and he himself was sorely wounded by the archers.

Q. What did he request of his armor-bearer?

A. That he would take his sword and thrust him through, that he might not fall into the hands of the enemy, who might abuse him.

Q. Was Saul slain by his armor-bearer?

A. No; he would not do it; so Saul, in the bitterness of his spirit, fell upon his own sword.

Q. What was the effect upon his servant?

A. When he perceived that Saul was dead, he likewise fell upon his sword and died with him.

Q. Did David rejoice when he heard of the death of Saul?

A. When it was told him, he rent his clothes, and so did the men who were with him; and they mourned and wept for Saul, for Jonathan, and for those of the house of Israel who had fallen by the sword.

Q. Who acquainted David with the sad calamity which had befallen the Israelites?

A. The third day after the battle a young man from the camp of Israel, came to David with his clothes rent and earth upon his head, and he told him all that had befallen Saul and Jonathan.

Q. What was the language of lamentation used by David?

A. This was the lamentation of David: The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines

rejoice; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided. They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions.

How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high places! I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

Q. Was David at once acknowledged king of Israel?

A. Abner, the captain of Saul's host, proclaimed Ish-bosheth, son of Saul, king over all Israel, but he reigned only two years. The house of Judah followed David.

Q. Were the houses of David and Saul at peace with each other?

A. No; there was war between them; but it is written that the house of David

waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

Q. Did Abner continue with the house of Saul?

A. He did not; but said to Ish-bosheth, whom he had occasioned to be made king, that the kingdom was to be translated from the house of Saul, and that David's throne was to be set up over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.

Q. What occurred to Abner soon after this?

A. Joab, who did not like Abner, and who may have been jealous of his power, called him aside, in the gate, to speak quietly with him, and took his life.

Q. Did David cause the people to put on mourning for Abner?

A. He told them to rend their clothes, and gird themselves with sackcloth; and David himself followed the bier.

Q. Were the people gratified with David's manifestations of respect for Abner?

A. They were well pleased when they understood that Abner was not slain by direction of the king.

Q. What did David say of Abner?

A. The king said to his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man

fallen this day in Israel? and I am this day weak, though anointed king.

Q. Did the tribes of Israel now gather round David?

A. All the tribes came, and said, We are thy bone and thy flesh; even when Saul was king over us, thou leddest out and broughtest in Israel; and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

Q. With whom did David make a league?

A. With the elders of Israel who came to him at Hebron he made a league, and they anointed David king over Israel.

Q. What was David's age when he was made king?

A. David was thirty years old when he began to reign.

Q. Who built David a house in Jerusalem?

A. Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to David, and also sent cedar-trees and carpenters and masons, and they built him a house.

Q. How many did David take with him to remove the ark of the covenant from the house of Abinadab to Jerusalem?

A. Thirty thousand chosen men; and they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and David and all the house of Israel played be-

fore the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir-wood.

Q. By what was the cart drawn?

A. By oxen; and on the way they shook the ark, and Uzzah put forth his hand and took hold of it, to steady it; and it is written, because of this, God smote him for his error, and he died by the ark.

Q. Should Uzzah lose his life for attempting to steady the ark?

A. We frequently hear this circumstance brought into view to illustrate the importance of guarding against an untempered zeal in relation to spiritual concerns. The ark is represented as sacred, and not to be touched with unhallowed hands, or without divine direction.

Q. But do we hear of persons losing their lives by so doing?

A. If we are not watchful, and attempt to exercise our own judgment without reference to the divine will, we are in danger of losing our spiritual life. It is in this sense that the circumstance of Uzzah is quoted as a warning.

Q. Was the ark then taken to Jerusalem?

A. David was struck with fear, because of the death of Uzzah, and turned aside and left the ark at the house of Obed-edom.

Q. What is said about the house of Obededom?

A. That the ark remained in this house three months, and the Lord blessed Obededom and all his household.

Q. When David heard that because of the ark they were thus blessed, what did he do?

A. He took it from the house of Obededom, and brought it to the city of David with gladness.

Q. Were the people rejoiced to have it in the city?

A. They brought it up with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

Q. As David sat in his house resting from all his enemies, what presented to him to do?

A. As he was thus sitting, he said to Nathan the prophet, See, now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.

Q. What was Nathan's answer?

A. Go, do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee.

Q. Had Nathan a vision that night?

A. That night Nathan had a vision in which he was told to say to David that he should not build a house for the Lord.

Q. Was any thing more shown the prophet?

A. Yes; he was also instructed to tell David that Solomon his son should build the house, and be established upon his throne, and that the divine blessing would rest upon Solomon.

Q. What did David do in relation to the house which he proposed to build?

A. The materials, of which he had provided an abundance, he gave to Solomon, and requested him to add to them, and to erect a temple in which to place the ark and the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle.

Q. Did David give directions about the building?

A. He gave Solomon particular directions in regard to every part of it; all of which he said, he had been made to understand by the hand of the Lord upon him.

Q. Did he assure Solomon that he would be helped in building the temple?

A. His language was, Be strong and of good courage, and do it; fear not, nor be dismayed, for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the Lord.

Q. Before whom did David acknowledge that he was not permitted to build the house?

A. He assembled all the princes and chiefs

of his kingdom, and told them he had designed to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant, and had made ready for the building, but he had been shown he should not build it.

Q. Did he tell them why he could not?

A. He gave as a reason that the Lord had said to him, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war and hast shed blood.

Q. Does not this prove that war and bloodshed are offensive in the divine sight?

A. It seems to do so very clearly, and to be in accordance with the Divine character as a God of Love.

Q. Where, in the New Testament, can we find a text in which especial reference is made to the high and holy One as a God of Love?

A. In the epistle of John, 4th chapter and 16th verse, we read: God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.

Q. What did David exhort the people to do on this occasion?

A. To seek and to keep the commandments of the Lord, that they might possess the good land, and leave it for an inheritance for their children forever.

Q. What advice did he give Solomon?

A. He said, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek him, He will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, He will cast thee off forever.

Q. In what way did David show his kind feeling for the house of Saul?

A. David inquired, Is there any left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

Q. Was there any found?

A. Ziba told the king, Jonathan has a son who is lame in his feet; and the king sent for him.

Q. What did David propose to do for the son of his friend?

A. David told him that for his father's sake he would restore to him all the lands that were Saul's; and that he should eat continually at the king's table.

Q. What did David do for Ziba?

A. He called for Ziba, and told him what he was going to do for Jonathan's son Mephibosheth; and that he wanted him and his sons to till the land, and to bring in the

fruits to his master's son ; but that his master's son must always eat at the king's table.

Q. How many were in the household of Ziba ?

A. Fifteen sons and twenty servants, all of whom were servants to Mephibosheth.

Q. In what way did Nathan bring a sin of David's before him ?

A. He spake by parable, and told him that there were two men in one city. One was rich, and the other poor. The rich man had a great many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had brought up and nourished ; it grew up together with him and his children. It ate of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he did not take of his own flock and of his own herd, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

Q. What did David think of this ?

A. His anger was greatly kindled, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die ; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he had no pity.

Q. What did Nathan then say to David ?

A. Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man;" Thou hast been anointed king over Israel, and delivered from the hand of Saul, then wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, and done evil in His sight?

Q. What was the evil alluded to, by Nathan?

A. He had killed Uriah the Hittite, or had caused his life to be taken, in order that he might marry his widow.

Q. What reply did David make?

A. He said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

Q. Of what did Nathan assure David?

A. That the Lord had put away or forgiven his sins, and that he should not die; but that his son should surely die.

Q. Was David distressed for the child?

A. He besought God for it, and fasted and lay all night upon the earth; but on the seventh day the child died.

Q. Did the servants fear to tell David the child was dead?

A. They said, He would not hearken to us while the child was yet alive, how will he then be troubled if we tell him that he is dead; and they whispered among themselves to know what to do.

Q. Did they tell David?

A. When he saw them whispering, he perceived what had happened, and asked them if the child was dead?

Q. What did David do when he heard he was gone?

A. He arose from the earth and washed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped; then he came to his own house, and when bread was set before him, he partook of it.

Q. Did his servants marvel at him?

A. They said to him, What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child when it was alive, but when it was dead thou didst arise and eat bread.

Q. Did David give his reason for so doing?

A. He said, While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept, for who could tell whether God would be gracious, and the child might live; but now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

Q. What was the name of the child's mother?

A. Bathsheba.

Q. Was not she the mother of Solomon?

A. Yes; Solomon was also her son.

Q. David had a son, Absalom; did he grieve his father?

A. Absalom was an ambitious man, and he sought to estrange the hearts of the people from his father the king, and attach them to himself.

Q. Was he successful?

A. In great measure; so as to create sad trouble in the house of Israel.

Q. Was David especially fond of his son Absalom?

A. He was; and granted him many favors.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HOUSE OF SAUL — ABSALOM — DEATH OF
ABSALOM — ZADOK AND ABIATHAR — SHEBA —
FAMINE — ADONIJAH — BATHSHEBA — NATHAN
— SOLOMON ANOINTED KING — DEATH OF
DAVID.

Question. Did the divisions in Israel arouse the ambition of another, who was not of David's household?

Answer. Yes; Ziba came to David with asses laden with presents; and when the king asked him what it meant, he begged that he might find favor in his sight.

Q. Did David remind him that he and all that he had belonged to Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son?

A. He did, and Ziba said, For that reason he had come out of Jerusalem; for Mephibosheth had said, That to-day the house of Israel should restore to him the kingdom of his father.

Q. Did the house of Saul give any further evidences of dissatisfaction?

A. When David came to Bahurim, a man of the family of the house of Saul came out and stoned him and those who were with him.

Q. Did others join this man?

A. There were mighty men on his right hand and on his left, and David was accused of being a man of blood.

Q. What did David say to those who would have punished this faction?

A. David said, If *my son* seek my life, how much more may this Benjamite do it; let him alone.

Q. What noted prophet united with Absalom?

A. Ahithophel, who professed to have inquired at the oracle of God.

Q. What did he advise Absalom to do?

A. To go out against his father while he was weak-handed and weary; and he said that all who were with him would flee, and he would strike the king only.

Q. Did Absalom take his advice?

A. He first called Hushai, to hear what he would say.

Q. Did Hushai unite in judgment with Ahithophel?

A. He told Absalom that the counsel was not good at that time, for, said he, Thou knowest thy father and his men are mighty men, and were chafed in mind as a bear robbed of her whelps, and thy father would not lodge with the people, but he is hid now in some pit.

Q. What did Hushai propose that Absalom should do?

A. To gather all the people from Dan to Beersheba, and go in person against the king; and Absalom liked this advice better than Ahithophel's, for he thought the latter might favor his father the king.

Q. Did David know that Absalom was strengthening his forces?

A. Two men were sent to inform him.

Q. What happened these men?

A. They were seen by their enemies, and took refuge in a well in a court near by. In order to conceal them, a woman put a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn upon it.

Q. Were they discovered in their hiding-place?

A. No; when those who sought them could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

Q. Was Ahithophel displeased that his counsel was not taken?

A. We are told, that, when he saw that it was not regarded, he hung himself.

Q. What did David and those who were with him do, when they were told of what Absalom designed doing?

A. They crossed the river Jordan that night, and by the morning light there was not one left behind.

Q. Did David purpose to go with them into the field?

A. He did, but they were not willing; they said, Thou shalt not go; if we flee away, it will not matter; neither if half of us die will we be cared for; but thou art worth ten thousand of us; therefore it is better that thou succor us out of the city.

Q. Did David submit to this arrangement?

A. He told them he would do what seemed best to them; but said to his chief men, Deal gently for *my* sake with the young man, even with Absalom; and all the people heard, when he gave the captains charge concerning Absalom.

Q. What happened to Absalom?

A. Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and Absalom's hair caught hold of the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth, and the mule passed on.

Q. Did any one see him?

A. A certain man saw him and went to tell Joab; and Joab said, Why didst thou not smite him to the ground, and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver.

Q. Did the man regret not doing it?

A. He said, Though I were to receive a thousand shekels of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged us and his other captains, to beware that none touch the young man Absalom.

Q. What did Joab say to this?

A. "I may not tarry thus with thee; and he took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom as he hung from the oak."

Q. How were the people notified to return?

A. Joab blew a trumpet, and the people turned back from pursuing Israel.

Q. What became of the body of Absalom?

A. They cast it into a deep pit in the wood, and laid a great heap of stones upon it, and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

Q. Who desired to go to the king and tell him what had happened?

A. Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, said, Let me now run and bear the king tidings how that the Lord hath avenged him of his enemies.

Q. Did he go at once?

A. Joab said, Not to-day; thou shalt bear the tidings another day; go not to-day, as the king's son is dead.

Q. Was another messenger sent?

A. Cushie was sent by Joab, to go and tell the king what he had seen.

Q. Did Ahimaaz insist upon running after Cushie?

A. He said to Joab, Let me, I pray thee, run after Cushie. Joab replied, Why wouldst thou run, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready? but as Ahimaaz still urged it, he was told to run, and he went by the way of the plain and arrived before Cushie.

Q. Was David upon the watch for the messenger?

A. The king sat between the two gates, and a watchman went up to the roof over the gate to look, and he saw a man running alone.

Q. Did he tell the king that he saw a man coming?

A. Yes; and David said, If he be alone, he brings tidings. The man came so fast that he soon drew near.

Q. Did the watchman discover another running?

A. He saw one coming, and called to the porter and told him, another man was running alone; and the king said, He also brings tidings.

Q. Did the watchman know the men, as they came near him?

A. He said, the first looked like Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok. The king remarked, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings. Ahimaaz advanced, and said to the king, "All is well."

Q. What question did David put to him?

A. Is the young man Absalom safe? And he said, When Joab sent thy servant, I saw a tumult, but I knew not what it was.

Q. What did the king direct him to do?

A. To turn aside and stand there; and he did so and stood still.

Q. What did Cushì say when he came?

A. He said, Tidings, my lord the king, — for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

Q. Did David inquire of him concerning Absalom?

A. He inquired if the young man was safe; and Cushì answered, Let all the enemies of my lord the king be as this young man.

Q. Was the king moved by this answer?

A. He was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept, — and as he went he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God, I had died for thee! O Absalom, my son, my son!

Q. Did the people sympathize with David in his affliction?

A. The victory of that day was turned into mourning, because of the grief of the king.

Q. How did the people who had joined with Absalom against his father, return to the city?

A. It is said, they came in by stealth, as a people who are ashamed steal away when they flee from battle.

Q. Did David continue to grieve for his son?

A. He covered his face, and cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!

Q. Who reminded him of his duties as a king?

A. Joab came into the king's house, and told him that his servants who had saved his life were dissatisfied, in that he manifested more love for his enemies than his friends.

Q. What had David said, that induced his servants to think he did not care for them?

A. David had declared, that he regarded neither princes nor servants; and Joab said, they perceived that if Absalom had lived, and all of them had died, he would have been well pleased.

Q. What did he tell David he ought to do?

A. To arise and go forth, and speak comfortably to his servants, for if he did not, none would remain with him; and that would be worse than all the evil that had befallen him from his youth until now.

Q. Did the king heed the counsel of Joab?

A. He arose and sat in the gate; and when the people were told the king was sitting in the gate, they all came before him; "for Israel had fled, every man to his tent."

Q. Were the different tribes of Israel anxious to manifest their allegiance to David?

A. The people throughout all Israel were at strife, saying, Absalom whom we anointed king is dead; and inasmuch as the king delivered us from the hand of the Philistines, why not have him brought back.

Q. Were the men of Judah among those who were demanding the king's return?

A. We suppose not, as David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak ye unto the elders of Judah and say, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house; ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh, wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king.

Q. Did Judah listen to the priests?

A. The heart of all Judah was bowed as the heart of one man, and they sent this word, "Return thou and all thy servants."

Q. How were the king's household conveyed across the river?

A. In a ferry-boat; and after the king had crossed over Jordan, the son of Jonathan came down to meet him, without having his feet dressed, or his beard trimmed, or his clothes washed.

Q. Did the king reprove him for having left him?

A. He simply asked Mephibosheth why he went not with him.

Q. What reason did he give?

A. That he had been deceived by his servant; that he would have saddled an ass, and gone after the king, but he was *lame*; he then recounted the kindness of David to him, as the son of Jonathan, even after the treatment the king had received from the house of Saul.

Q. Did David give renewed tokens of his respect for the son of his friend?

A. He said, Speak no more about the matter; I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land.

Q. We read of Barzillai; who was he?

A. He was an old man of fourscore years, who provided sustenance for the king when he lay at Mahanaim, and David now wished him to go up with him to Jerusalem.

Q. Did Barzillai go with the king?

A. He said he would go with him a little way; but as he no longer had pleasure in eating or drinking, or in hearing the voice of singing men or women, he would therefore be but a burden, and he would return to his own city, and be buried by his father and mother; and after he had gone a little way, the king blessed him, and he returned.

Q. What was the nature of the trouble which next appeared in Israel?

A. Sheba, of the tribe of Benjamin, said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; and he blew a trumpet, and the men of Israel, except Judah, who clung to David, went after Sheba.

Q. Who counselled with Joab as he was in pursuit of Sheba, and was battering the wall of the city of Abel?

A. It is recorded, a wise woman came out of the city and said to Joab, Come here, that I may speak to thee; I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel; thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel; why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?

Q. How did Joab excuse himself?

A. He said, Far be it from me; far be it from me that I should swallow up or destroy; but a man of Mount Ephraim, named Sheba, has lifted up his hand against the king, even against David; deliver him, and I will depart from the city.

Q. What did the woman promise Joab?

A. That his request should be granted, and that Sheba should no longer trouble them.

Q. In what way did she effect this?

A. It is written that the woman went to

the people in her wisdom, and they delivered Sheba into the hand of Joab; after which Joab blew the trumpet, and they retired from the city, and every man went to his tent.

Q. What next came upon Israel?

A. A famine of three years; but the history merely mentions the fact, and attributes the visitation to the house of Saul.

Q. Were the bones of Saul and Jonathan gathered and decently buried?

A. David took them from the men who had stolen them, and he buried them in the country of Benjamin, in the sepulchre of Kish.

Q. Did the Philistines again disturb the peace of David?

A. They made war against Israel, and David went down with his servants and fought against them.

Q. Did David grow weary?

A. He became faint, and the men of David said unto him, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel.

Q. Were there giants to contend with?

A. In this and the two battles which followed, there were four giants, the sons of the

giant of Gath, and they were all slain by David and his servants.

Q. When the garrison of the Philistines were in Bethlehem, what did David long for?

A. A drink of the water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate.

Q. Who volunteered to get it for him?

A. Three mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines, and drew water from the well and brought it to David.

Q. Did David enjoy this water?

A. He would not drink it, but poured it out before the Lord, and said, Far be it from me to drink it; is it not the blood of the men who jeopardized their lives for it?

Q. After the king was very old, which of his sons attempted to take the reins of government in his own hands?

A. Adonijah exalted himself, saying, I will be king; and he had chariots and horsemen, and fifty men rode before him.

Q. Did he confer with his father's counsellors?

A. He took counsel of Joab and Abiathar, but not with Zadok the priest, nor Nathan the prophet, neither did he confer with his brother Solomon.

Q. Was Nathan concerned about it?

A. The prophet was troubled, and sent Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, to the king to ask him if he did not say that Solomon was to be king, and was to possess the throne after him.

Q. Did Bathsheba present the whole matter before the king?

A. She went into the king's chamber and bowed herself before him. She then asked if he had not assured her that Solomon was to reign in his stead?

Q. Did she inform the king of what Adonijah was doing?

A. She told him how Adonijah had slain oxen, cattle, and sheep, and had invited Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host, with all the king's sons, except Solomon.

Q. Did she urge the importance of David's making public his wish concerning his successor to the throne?

A. She said to David, That all the people were looking upon him, expecting him to tell them who should reign in his stead, and if he should be gathered to his fathers without doing so, that she and her son Solomon would be counted offenders.

Q. Who came in while she talked with the king?

A. Nathan came, and after making obeisance to the king, queried with him whether he had appointed Adonijah king after him; for he had that day made a feast, or slain cattle in abundance, even as Bathsheba had told him; the prophet said, Hast thou so done, and not showed it to thy servant?

Q. Did Bathsheba retire when the prophet entered?

A. She had gone out, and the king said, Call Bathsheba; he also desired the presence of Zadok the priest, and Benaiah.

Q. What was the object of this council?

A. He said to them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon to ride upon my own mule, and take him down to Gihon; and let Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, anoint him there, king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save the king.

Q. What were they to do after Solomon was thus proclaimed king.

A. They were to place him upon the throne; for, said David, He shall be king in my stead; and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

Q. Were the king's directions strictly followed?

A. Yes; they were carried out. Solomon

rode upon the mule of the king, and at Gihon, Zadok took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle and anointed him; when they blew the trumpet, the people said, God save king Solomon.

Q. Did the people give further demonstrations of loyalty?

A. "The people followed Solomon and his train, piping with pipes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them."

Q. Were Adonijah and his guests aware of what was going on?

A. When they heard the sound of the trumpet, they asked why the city was in an uproar, and were told that Solomon had been anointed king.

Q. Were they alarmed for their own safety?

A. They arose and each man went his way, but Adonijah, fearing king Solomon, went and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

Q. What did Solomon say when he was told that Adonijah, through fear of him, was holding fast to the horns of the altar?

A. Solomon said, If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth; but if wickedness be found in him, he shall die.

Q. Did Solomon send for Adonijah?

A. He sent and brought him down from the altar, and Adonijah bowed himself to king Solomon; and the king said, Go to thine house.

Q. Was David conscious that he had not long to live?

A. He said to Solomon, I go the way of all the earth; be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep His statutes and His commandments, His judgments and His testimonies, as written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.

Q. Did David give his son charges concerning his faithful friends?

A. He bade him be kind to the sons of Barzillai, and let them be of those who ate at his table; for they came to him when he had to flee because of his son Absalom.

Q. How long did David reign over Israel?

A. Forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and thirty-three in Jerusalem; when he died and was buried in the city of David.

Remarks.—We have followed David through many of the vicissitudes of his eventful life,

but have not entered minutely into the sanguinary conflicts in which he was engaged, and which occasioned him so much disquiet and trouble. In the period in which he lived it appears to have been common to refer the settlement of difficulties to the edge of the sword,—a practice not to be imitated by a people professing to be Christians, or the followers of him who so impressively taught the importance of loving our enemies—doing good to those who hate or persecute us, that we may “be the children of our Father in heaven.”

If, in the perusal of David's history, we make a spiritual application of the difficulties which encompassed him, and the enemies with which he had to contend, we shall discover there is teaching in it, and in this way it is rendered valuable.

Throughout David's life there seems to have been a deep religious sentiment which occasioned him when guilty of wrong-doing, to humble himself as in the dust, and to seek divine forgiveness.

Some of his psalms exhibit sublime conceptions of Jehovah as the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the Universe, and present a child-like resignation and an unwavering faith and confidence in Him.

Between seventy and eighty of the psalms

contained in the book of Psalms are ascribed to David. Many of those of later date were probably by the persecuted prophets, and others in the time of the kings; some from those in exile, and others later still, containing references to their captivity. The ninetieth psalm is attributed to Moses; twelve are ascribed to Asaph; eleven to the sons of Korah; two to Solomon, and one to each of the singers Heman and Ethan. Those which are anonymous were probably written after David's, and are in imitation of his style and manner.

Luther, in his preface to the Psalter, says: "Where canst thou find nobler words of joy than in the Psalms of praise and thanksgiving? Thou mayst there look into the hearts of all good men as into pleasant and beautiful gardens, where are to be found springing up every kind of pleasing and rejoicing thoughts towards God and His goodness."

CHAPTER XIV.

A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING SPOKEN BY DAVID AFTER HIS DELIVERANCE FROM HIS ENEMIES AND FROM THE HAND OF SAUL.

THE Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, the God of my rock; in Him will I trust; He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my high tower and my refuge, my Saviour, Thou savest me from violence. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

When the waves of death compassed me about, the snares of death prevented me; in my distress, I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God; and he did hear my voice out of His temple, and my cry did enter into His ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because of His wrath. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down, and darkness was under His feet. And

He rode upon a cherub, and did fly : and He was seen upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness pavilions round about Him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

Through the brightness before Him were coals of fire kindled. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice. And He sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them. And the channels of the sea appeared; the foundations of the world were discovered at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of His nostrils.

He sent from above. He took me; He drew me out of many waters; He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me; for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity; but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place; He delivered me, because He delighted in me. The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all His judgments were before me; and as for His statutes, I did not depart from them.

I was also upright before Him, and have

kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his eye-sight. With the merciful Thou wilt show thyself merciful, and with the upright man Thou wilt show Thyself upright. With the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure; and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself unsavory.

And the afflicted people Thou wilt save; but Thine eyes are upon the haughty, that Thou mayst bring them down. For Thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness. For by Thee I have run through a troop; by my God have I leaped over a wall. As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried: He is a buckler to all them that trust in Him.

For who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God?

God is my strength and power. He maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet; and setteth me upon my high places. He teacheth my hands to war: so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arm. Thou hast also given me the shield of Thy salvation; and thy gentleness hath made me great. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, so that my feet did not slip. I

have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them, and turned not again until I had consumed them. And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise; yea, they are fallen under my feet. For Thou hast girded me with strength to battle; them that rose up against me, hast Thou subdued under me. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me. They looked, but there was none to save, even unto the Lord, — but He answered them not.

Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth; I did stamp them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad. Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of my people; Thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen; a people I know not shall serve me. Strangers shall submit themselves unto me; as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me. Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close places. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and exalted be the God of the Rock of my salvation.

It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me, and that bringeth me forth from mine enemies. Thou hast also lifted me up on high above them

that rose up against me. Thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

Therefore I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto Thy name.

He is the tower of salvation for His king, and showeth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

CHAPTER XV.

SOLOMON—THE TWO MOTHERS—HIRAM, KING OF TYRE—THE TEMPLE—VESSELS OF GOLD—DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE—QUEEN OF SHEBA—THRONE OF SOLOMON—JEROBOAM—SOLOMON'S DEATH.

Question. After the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon, did he walk in the statutes of his father?

Answer. It is said that Solomon loved the Lord, and walked in his father's statutes.

Q. Where did he go to sacrifice?

A. The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice; for that was the great high place.

Q. What is the signification of Gibeon?

A. A hill, or cup; or, that which is lifted up.

Q. What befel Solomon at Gibeon?

A. He had a dream, in which he thought God asked him what He should give him.

Q. What did Solomon request should be given him?

A. He alluded to the gracious dealings of the Most High with his father, and said, now that he was made king, he felt as a little child, and unable to rule Israel, a mighty people that could not be numbered; he therefore asked for an understanding heart, and for judgment to discern between good and bad; for who, said he, is able to judge this great people?

Q. Was this request approved?

A. Yes; it is written that because Solomon had not asked long life, nor riches for himself, neither the life of his enemies, but had asked understanding and discernment, he should receive in accordance with his wishes.

Q. What beside understanding was given Solomon?

A. The language is, Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee; neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

And I have also given thee what thou hast not asked — both riches and honor, — so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days.

Q. Was he reminded of the example of his father David?

A. Yes; and the promise was, that if he would walk in the ways of the Lord, and keep his statutes and commandments as his father David had walked, that he should be given length of days.

Q. Did Solomon accept this dream as a prophecy or vision?

A. We may judge so, — as he returned to Jerusalem, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

Q. What circumstance is narrated, in which Solomon's superior wisdom was manifested?

A. Two women came to Solomon, each claiming the same child, and wished him to decide to which of them it belonged.

Q. How could the same child be claimed by two women?

A. The women lived in the same house, and had children near the same age. In the night one of the children died, and she with whom the dead child was found, accused the

other with taking her child and putting in his place the lifeless child.

Q. What means did the king adopt to discover the true mother?

A. He asked for a sword, and said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.

Q. Would the women consent to so cruel an act?

A. One of them whose heart yearned for her son, said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it; but the other said, Let it be neither thine nor mine, but divide it.

Q. What was Solomon's decision?

A. He commanded that it should be given to the first, saying, In no wise slay it; she is the mother.

Q. Did the people marvel at his wisdom?

A. When Israel heard of the judgment of the king, they feared him, for they saw that the wisdom of God was with him.

Q. What is said of Solomon's provisions for one day?

A. That they amounted to thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fattened fowl.

Q. Did peace reign throughout his dominion?

A. "He had peace on all sides round about him; from Dan even to Beersheba, every man dwelt in safety under his vine and under his fig-tree, throughout the days of Solomon."

Q. How many horses had Solomon?

A. He had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

Q. Who provided for all the king's horses and dromedaries, for he had dromedaries too?

A. Officers were appointed to furnish all with food from the king's table, and they lacked nothing.

Q. Were various proofs given of Solomon's wisdom?

A. Yes; and it was said to excel the wisdom of the East, and also of Egypt, for he was wiser than all men. He is reported to have spoken three thousand proverbs, and his songs to have amounted to one thousand and five.

Q. Was he an admirer of Nature?

A. "He spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of

beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes."

Q. What king manifested his respect for Solomon, by sending his servants to him?

A. Hiram, king of Tyre, when he heard Solomon was anointed king, sent his servants to him, for he ever loved David.

Q. What subject of especial interest did Solomon introduce to Hiram?

A. The building of the house which his father David could not build, because of the wars which were about him on every side. But he being at rest, with "no adversary nor evil occurrence" to disturb him, purposed now to build it, and told Hiram.

Q. What did he ask of the king of Tyre?

A. That the king's servants should aid his servants in hewing cedar-trees in Lebanon; for, said he, thou knowest that there is not among us any that can hew with the skill of the Sidonians.

Q. Was Hiram willing to lend assistance in getting timber?

A. When he heard the proposition of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the Lord this day who has given unto David a wise son over this great people; and he sent word to Solomon that he would

do all that he desired concerning the timber of cedar and of fir.

Q. In what manner did he propose to get the timber to Jerusalem?

A. He said that his servants should bring it from Lebanon to the sea, and it should be floated down by the sea to any place that Solomon might appoint, and that in return Hiram should receive food for his household.

Q. How much did Solomon give Hiram yearly?

A. He gave him twenty thousand measures of wheat for his household, and twenty measures of pure oil, year by year; and Hiram gave Solomon as much cedar and fir as he desired.

Q. Did Solomon and Hiram proceed with the work harmoniously?

A. There was peace between them, and it is said they made a league, which means agreement or covenant.

Q. Were there many workmen employed?

A. Solomon made a levy of thirty thousand men, and sent them to Lebanon ten thousand at a time.

Q. Had he other workmen?

A. He had seventy thousand who bore burdens, and eighty thousand hewers in the mountains.

Q. How many officers were appointed to oversee the work?

A. There were thirty-three thousand who attended to the workmen.

Q. Did they get stone as well as wood?

A. The workmen brought great and costly stones, and Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders hewed and squared them.

Q. How long had Solomon been king, when he commenced to build the house?

A. It was in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and four hundred and eight years after the children of Israel left Egypt.

Q. Was this house or temple very magnificent?

A. More grand and beautiful than we can here describe, but a particular account of it may be found in the sixth chapter of the first Kings.

Q. What is said of the manner in which it was builded?

A. That "there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building, for it was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither."

Q. Did he make a place in the temple for the ark of the covenant?

A. He prepared a place for the ark, and called it the Oracle.

Q. Of what was the partition before the Oracle made?

A. It was made of chains of gold, and the Oracle and the Altar and House within, was overlaid with pure gold.

Q. Who was it that Solomon brought from Tyre, to work in metal?

A. Hiram, the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, whose father was a man of Tyre, and a worker in brass.

Q. Was he remarkably ingenious?

A. "He was filled with wisdom and understanding and cunning, to work all works of brass."

Q. Of what were the vessels made, which were designed for the temple?

A. They were made of gold. There were five candlesticks on the right hand, and five on the left, of pure gold; before the Oracle were flowers and lamps and tongs of gold; and the bowls, the snuffers, the basins, and spoons and censers, were of pure gold.

Q. What did Solomon do with the vessels which his father had dedicated?

A. He brought them and put them among the treasures of the house which he had built.

Q. Did Solomon dedicate this house to the Lord?

A. He gathered all the elders of Israel, with the heads of the tribes, and had them bring up the Ark of the Covenant out of the city of David, and also the holy vessels; and they sacrificed before the Ark so many sheep and oxen, that it is said they could not be numbered; and then the priests brought the Ark and placed it in the Oracle of the house, which was esteemed the most holy place.

Q. Did the priests minister upon this occasion?

A. After they had deposited the Ark in its place, the cloud filled the house, so that the priests could not stand to minister before the cloud; the glory of the Lord had filled the temple.

Q. Did Solomon speak when the people were gathered?

A. He blessed the house as in the presence of the great I AM; and he asked that all who made supplication before the Lord in that house, might be blessed. For an account of the dedication of this temple, read the eighth chapter of first Kings. In a spiritual sense it may be regarded as a beautiful figure of "the temple which the Lord hath pitched, and not man."

Q. How long was Solomon in building the temple?

A. He was seven years in building the temple, and thirteen years in building his own house.

Q. Was Solomon reminded again in a dream, of the necessity of walking in obedience to the divine law?

A. It is written that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time as at Gibeon, and said, His supplication had been heard, and the house had been hallowed which he had built to the name of the Lord, and if he would walk before Him in uprightness and integrity, that he should be established upon the throne of Israel.

Q. Who heard of Solomon's wisdom, and came to prove him with hard questions?

A. The Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, of the temple, and of his wisdom, and came to prove him with hard questions.

Q. Did she come alone?

A. No; she came to Jerusalem with a very great train; with camels bearing spices, and a great deal of gold, and many precious stones; and when she came she talked with Solomon of all that was in her heart.

Q. Could the king answer her questions?

A. He answered them all; there was nothing hid from Solomon that he could not tell her.

Q. What did she think of all that she heard and saw?

A. After hearing Solomon and seeing the house which he had built, and all the grandeur by which he was surrounded, she told the king, that the report she had heard in her own country was true.

Q. Had she not believed the report?

A. She had not believed what she had heard; but when she had seen for herself, she found the half had not been told her, — and she said to Solomon, Thy wisdom and thy prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighteth in thee to set thee on the throne of Israel.

Q. Did she tell Solomon why he had been made king over Israel?

A. Yes; she said, "Because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he Solomon king to do judgment and justice."

Q. Did she make presents to the king?

A. She gave him a hundred and twenty talents of gold and a very great store of precious stones and spices; no presents to the king equalled in abundance those given by the queen of Sheba.

Q. Was Solomon equally generous to the queen?

A. He gave her all she desired and asked for, beside that which he presented of his royal bounty; after which she and her servants returned to their own country.

Q. What kind of throne did Solomon make?

A. He made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold; it had six steps, and a lion was placed on each end of every step, and two lions beside the seat. There was no throne like it in any kingdom.

Q. Of what were his drinking-vessels made?

A. "Of gold; and all the vessels of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver."

Q. What was brought by the navy of Solomon from Tarshish once in three years?

A. It brought to Solomon gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

Q. Did Solomon's riches exceed that of other kings?

A. Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom; and all the earth it was said sought him to hear the wisdom which God had put in his heart.

Q. Did those who came to him bring him presents?

A. Every man brought his present,—vessels of silver and vessels of gold, and garments and armor, spices, horses and mules; a rate year by year was brought to the king.

Q. Did Solomon, as he advanced in life, continue to regard the commandments given him by the Lord?

A. When Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and he did not do right in the sight of the Lord.

Q. Was he rebuked for his disobedience?

A. Twice the Lord appeared unto Solomon, and bade him not to go after other gods, but Solomon obeyed not.

Q. What was the consequence?

A. Part of his kingdom was taken from him, and he was beset with enemies.

Q. To whom was the kingdom given?

A. To Jeroboam, a young man of valor, whom Solomon had placed over the house of Joseph.

Q. In what way was Jeroboam made acquainted with his new position?

A. He went out of Jerusalem, and was met by the prophet Ahijah, who caught Jeroboam's garment, which was new, and he rent it in twelve pieces, and gave ten pieces to Jeroboam, and told him that the Lord

would rend the kingdom out of Solomon's hand, and would give him ten tribes.

Q. Was the reason given why Solomon's son should not inherit the throne?

A. Yes; because Solomon and his house had forsaken the Lord, and worshipped Ash-toreth; they walked not in the ways of the Lord, and kept not his statutes and judgments as did David.

Q. Why was a *portion* of the kingdom to remain under Solomon's government?

A. It was said, I will give him one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city in which I have chosen to put my name.

Q. Was a promise made to Jeroboam that he should prosper?

A. He was given a conditional promise, that, if he would be faithful to the divine commandments, the Lord would be with him, and build him a sure house, as He had built for David and Israel.

Q. Did enmity exist between Solomon and Jeroboam?

A. It did; and Jeroboam fled into Egypt, and remained there until after the death of Solomon.

Q. How long did Solomon reign in Jerusalem?

A. For forty years he reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel.

Q. Where was he buried?

A. When Solomon "slept with his fathers," he was buried in the city of David.

Q. What do the writings of Solomon include?

A. They are generally understood to include the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, though it is by no means certain that he was the author of them all.

Q. Why is the book called "The Proverbs" so named?

A. Because it is a collection of sayings which contain a great deal of wisdom in a few words. Though it is not likely Solomon composed them all, he may have compiled them in their present form.

Q. What does "Ecclesiastes" mean?

A. Literally, it means—the preacher, or one who addresses an assembly. The object of this book seems to be to teach the vanity of all things, and to show that the only true wisdom consists in fearing God and keeping His commandments.

Q. Is the book of Canticles known by another name?

A. It is also called the Song of Songs. It is thought by some to be an allegorical poem,

founded on the spiritual relation which exists between the Universal Father and His Church.

CHAPTER XVI.

DANIEL THE PROPHET.

DANIEL — NEBUCHADNEZZAR — HANANIAH —
MISHAEL — AZARIAH — THE CAPTIVES' FOOD
— THE KING'S DREAM — INTERPRETATION —
DANIEL — HIS THREE FRIENDS — THE KING'S
DECREE — FIERY-FURNACE — DELIVERANCE
— ANOTHER DREAM — BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST
— HIS DREAM — DANIEL INTERPRETS IT —
DANIEL PROMOTED — BELSHAZZAR'S DEATH
— DARIUS — DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN —
HIS ESCAPE — CYRUS.

DANIEL, called Belteshazzar by the Chaldeans, was a prophet, descended from the royal family of David. He was carried captive to Babylon when very young, and was chosen with his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, to reside at Nebuchadnezzar's court, where he received an educa-

tion in all the sciences of the Chaldeans; but he declined to eat of the provisions from the king's table. He afterwards became greatly distinguished by interpreting the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, for which he was promoted to a high office. The Book of Daniel relates his history, and we will refer to that for a further account of him.

Question. Who was king of Judah at the time Jerusalem was besieged, and Daniel, with others, was taken captive?

Answer. Jehoiakim was king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem.

Q. Did the king of Babylon disturb the vessels of the temple built by Solomon?

A. He took part of them into the land of Shinar, and deposited them in the treasure-house of his god.

Q. In what way was Daniel introduced to Nebuchadnezzar's notice?

A. The king requested that some of the children of Israel, "who were princes, and in whom there was no blemish, but who were well-favored, cunning in knowledge, skilful in wisdom, and who understood science, and who had ability to stand in the king's palace, should be taught the learning and the

tongue of the Chaldeans;" and Daniel was one of those selected for this purpose.

Q. Who, besides Daniel, are mentioned as having been chosen?

A. Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah.

Q. What were the names given these princes by the Chaldeans?

A. Daniel was called Belteshazzar; to Hananiah was given the name of Shadrach; to Mishaël that of Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

Q. Were provisions apportioned to these men by the king?

A. Yes; daily they were to be provided with the king's meat, and with such wine as he drank, in order that they might in three years stand before him.

Q. Was Daniel willing to partake of this food?

A. Daniel resolved that he would not eat of the meat, nor drink of the wine from the king's table.

Q. What reason did he give for his refusal.

A. He felt that it was not suitable food for him, and to use his own words, he "would not defile himself" by partaking of it, and requested the prince, under whose care they were placed, to excuse him from eating the meat and drinking the wine.

Q. Was the prince willing to do so?

A. The prince loved Daniel, and might have been willing, but he said, that he feared, if the king saw Daniel and his friends look worse than the rest, that it would endanger his own head.

Q. With what did Daniel propose they should be furnished, instead of the king's food?

A. He said, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days, and give us pulse to eat and water to drink, and then judge of our countenances and the countenances of those who eat the portion of the king; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

Q. Was Daniel's wish complied with?

A. Yes, with favorable results; at the end of ten days, "they were fairer and fatter in flesh," than those who ate meat and drank wine; so Melzar, the prince, continued to feed them upon pulse.

Q. What is pulse?

A. It is a kind of bean, which grows in pods like peas.

Q. Did these four children increase in wisdom and knowledge?

A. It is written, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Q. When the time came in which they were to be presented to the king, was he satisfied with them?

A. At the time specified by the king, they were brought before him, and he conversed with them, and acknowledged that among them all, none were found like Daniel, Hanaiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and they "stood before the king."

Q. In matters of wisdom and understanding, what was said of them?

A. When the king inquired of them in matters of wisdom and understanding, he found them "ten times better" than all the magicians and astrologers of his own realm.

Q. Was Daniel's wisdom put to the test after this?

A. Yes; the king had a dream, which "went from him," or which he could not remember, and he called upon the wise men, the astrologers and the Chaldeans, to tell him his dream, for it troubled him.

Q. Could they tell the king what he had dreamed?

A. They could not, but they told him if he would tell his dream, they would give the interpretation of it; but that there was no man upon earth, that could tell him what he had dreamed.

Q. Did the king still insist upon their doing so?

A. He told them, if they did not tell him his dream, and give him the interpretation of it, they should be put to death.

Q. What did they do in this extremity?

A. They said it was a rare thing that the king required, and that none other save the gods whose dwelling is not in flesh, could do it; and they would have to submit to the mandate of the king.

Q. What was the decree of the king respecting the wise men?

A. That they should be slain; and Daniel and his companions were sought in order to take their lives also.

Q. What did Daniel say to the king's captain, when he was informed of the decree of the king?

A. He asked why it was to be executed in so much haste. Then Arioch told him all about the inability of the wise men to satisfy the king.

Q. Did Daniel request that the judgment should be deferred?

A. He went to the king, and told him, if he would give him time, he would tell him his dream, and would interpret it.

Q. What course did Daniel pursue?

A. He went to his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and proposed that they should ask the mercies of God concerning this secret, so that he and they might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Q. Were their prayers heard and answered?

A. It is said, that the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night; and then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

. Q. How did Daniel express his gratitude?

A. "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his. He changeth the times and the seasons. He removeth kings, and setteth up kings. He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him. I thank Thee, and praise Thee, O Thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of Thee; for Thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."

Q. Did Daniel ask Arioch, the captain, to present him to the king?

A. He went to Arioch, and desired him

to present him to the king, for he was prepared to give an interpretation of his dream.

Q. In what manner did Arioch present Daniel?

A. He brought Daniel in haste to the king, and said, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation of the dream.

Q. What did Nebuchadnezzar say unto Daniel?

A. He said, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

Q. What was Daniel's answer?

A. He answered, The secret which the king hath demanded, cannot be shown him by the magicians, astrologers, and soothsayers; but there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and who will make known unto Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.

Q. Did Daniel then repeat the dream and the interpretation?

A. He first told the king that this secret was not revealed to him because of the wisdom he might have more than others, but for the sake of those who should make known the interpretation, and that the king might know the thoughts of his own heart.

Q. What was the dream, as given by Daniel?

A. Daniel said, Thou, O king, beheldst a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible.

Q. Did Daniel describe the image?

A. He said, this image's head was of fine gold, his arms of silver, his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Q. What befel this image?

A. He told the king that he had seen a stone that was cut without hands smite the feet of the image, and brake them to pieces.

Q. What became of the metal of which the image was formed?

A. "The iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and gold were broken to pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them."

Q. What is said of the stone that smote the image?

A. That it became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

Q. What was the interpretation?

A. That Nebuchadnezzar was a king of kings, and that his kingdom was one of

strength, power, and glory; that he had been made ruler over men, the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air; and that the golden head was he.

Q. What did the brass signify?

A. Other kingdoms were to rise inferior to Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, and the third kingdom was of brass, which should bear rule.

Q. What was the fourth kingdom?

A. This was to be "as strong as iron,—as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things."

Q. What did the feet, which were of iron and clay, represent?

A. A kingdom that should be divided; there should be in it the strength of iron, but it being partly of clay, it should be broken.

Q. What was said of the mixture of iron and clay?

A. Daniel said, Whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle with men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

Q. Was there another kingdom to be set up?

A. Yes; a kingdom which should never be destroyed; and the kingdom should not be

left to other people, but it should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and it should stand forever.

Q. What was the nature of this kingdom shown to be.

A. It had an allusion no doubt to a spiritual kingdom. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands represents Christ, the wisdom and power of God. His kingdom should break in pieces the kingdoms of this world, or the wisdom and power of men, and the spiritual kingdom would stand forever, it being in its nature eternal.

Q. What effect had the recital of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the interpretation of it upon him?

A. The king fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that an oblation and sweet odors should be offered him. He said to Daniel, Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.

Q. In what position did the king place Daniel?

A. He made of him a great man; he gave him a great many gifts, and appointed him ruler over the whole province of Babylon,

and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

Q. Were offices given to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

A. Daniel requested that they might be placed over the affairs of the province of Babylon; and Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

Q. Why should Daniel sit in the gate?

A. We have elsewhere said that "the gate" in ancient times was the seat of justice, and a place where all important matters were disposed of; and Daniel may have sat there as judge and ruler.

Q. Did anything occur which closely tried the faith of the children of Judah?

A. Nebuchadnezzar caused to be made an enormous golden image, which he had placed in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

Q. How did this image affect the Jews?

A. The king required that at the sound of music which he caused to be given on various instruments at certain periods, all men of whatever people, nation, or language, should fall down and worship the golden image which he had set up.

Q. What was the penalty, if they did not obey this command?

A. They were to be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Q. Was Nebuchadnezzar told that there were those who did not worship the golden image?

A. Certain Chaldeans came to him and told him that the Jews whom he had set over the affairs of the province, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, did not regard him. They served not his gods, nor worshipped the image he had set up.

Q. Did this enrage the king?

A. It is written, that in his rage and his fury he commanded the men to be brought before him, and said, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that ye do not serve my gods and worship the golden image.

Q. What did he threaten should be done with them if they would not obey him?

A. He told them, that if they would fall down at the sound of the musical instruments, it was well; and if not, they should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Q. What was the reply of these three men?

A. They said, O Nebuchadnezzar! we are not anxious about this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will

deliver us out of thy hand, O king! — but if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Q. What was the commandment of the king in relation to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

A. He was very angry, and his countenance changed towards them, and he directed that the furnace should be heated *seven* times more than it was wont to be heated.

Q. Whom did he require should throw these men into the furnace?

A. He caused the most mighty men that were in his army to bind them in their coats, their hose, their hats, and other garments, and cast them into the blazing furnace.

Q. What effect had the heat upon these mighty and strong men, who were chosen to perform this dreadful act?

A. The furnace being exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire slew them.

Q. What became of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

A. They fell bound into the midst of the fire.

Q. Was Nebuchadnezzar a witness of what he had occasioned to be done.

A. He was there, and said to his counselors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? and they said, "True, O king!"

Q. Why did the king ask this question?

A. He said, Lo! I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the son of God.

Q. What was the next act of the king?

A. He drew near the mouth of the furnace, and called to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, saying, Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither!

Q. Were they able to come forth?

A. It is said they came out of the midst of the fire; and the princes, governors, captains, and counsellors being gathered together, saw that the fire had no power over these men; that not an hair of their head was singed, neither were their coats changed, nor was the smell of fire upon them.

Q. What are we to understand by the wonderful deliverance here related?

A. That the power of the Most High is above every power, and that it is able to deliver from dangers of the most threatening character, and from trials which may justly

be compared to a furnace heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated.

Q. Will faith in this power enable others, as it did these three good men, to resist an unrighteous law, even though by doing so their natural lives may be in danger?

A. By a perfect trust and faith in this Almighty power, its all-sufficiency for every emergency will be proved.

Q. What may we understand by Nebuchadnezzar seeing four men loose in the furnace?

A. We read that the fourth was in the form of the Son of God. In a spiritual sense there is no difficulty in comprehending this. These men were thrown into the furnace bound, but by the power which preserved them from the fire they were loosened, and this power was no other than the Son of God.

Q. Their hair was not singed, nor their coats burned, neither was the smell of the fire upon them; has this an especial signification?

A. We understand it to teach that those whose trust and confidence are perfect, will be preserved in *every way*; and that they will be brought through afflictions and trials wholly unharmed.

Q. What could the king say, after this display of divine power?

A. He said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel and delivered his servants who trusted in Him, and who changed the king's word and preserved their bodies, that they might not worship any God, except their own God.

Q. Did he change his decree?

A. He said, I make a decree that every people, nation, and language, which says anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut to pieces, because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

Q. Were these men promoted by the king?

A. The king promoted them in the province of Babylon.

Q. What was the acknowledgment of Nebuchadnezzar in relation to the divine government after this?

A. He addressed himself to all people, and said, Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought towards me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation!

Q. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed the second time; did he call upon Daniel to interpret it?

A. His dream troubled him, and he gathered the magicians, astrologers, and sooth-sayers to interpret it, but they could not do it; and then he called Daniel.

Q. What reason did he give for telling his dream to Daniel?

A. He said to Daniel, Because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubles thee, tell me the visions of my dream, and the interpretation thereof.

Q. What was this vision?

A. He thought he saw a tree in the midst of the earth, of very great height, and it grew and was strong, and the height reached to heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth.

Q. Did this tree bear fruit?

A. The fruit was abundant, and it was meat for all; the leaves were fair, and the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the air dwelt in its branches.

Q. What was to be done to this tree?

A. The king beheld, in the vision, a watcher and an holy one come down from heaven, and He cried aloud and said, Hew down the tree, cut off the branches, shake off the leaves,

and scatter the fruit ; let the beasts get away from under it and the fowls from its branches.

Q. What was said about the stump of the tree ?

A. It was said, Leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth.

Q. What change was to take place in the heart ?

A. It is written, Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him, and let seven times pass over him.

Q. Was the cause of this change specified ?

A. Yes ; "To the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth to whomsoever He will."

Q. After Nebuchadnezzar had repeated this dream to Daniel, what did he request of him ?

A. That he should interpret it ; for, said he, All the wise men of my kingdom were unable ; but thou art able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.

Q. Did Daniel at once perceive the signification of the dream ?

A. For an hour, it is said, Daniel was troubled; and he then told the king that the tree which he saw, of such gigantic proportions, was himself. He had grown and become strong; his greatness reached unto heaven, and his dominion to the end of the earth.

Q. What did the hewing down of the tree signify?

A. Daniel interpreted it to mean, that the king should be driven from men, and his dwelling should be with the beasts of the field, and he should eat grass as oxen, and be wet with the dew of heaven; and seven times, or seven years, should pass over, until he should know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men.

Q. Did he allude to the stump of the tree, which was to be left?

A. Yes; the roots in the ground implied, that the kingdom should be sure unto Nebuchadnezzar, after he should know that the heavens do rule.

Q. Did Daniel offer counsel to the king?

A. He said to Nebuchadnezzar, Let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

Q. Did Daniel's interpretations come to pass?

A. All these things came upon Nebuchadnezzar.

Q. What did he say of Babylon?

A. At the end of twelve months, he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?

Q. What did he hear while he was yet speaking?

A. While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: the kingdom is departed from thee; and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field!

Q. How soon was the prediction fulfilled?

A. The same hour the thing was fulfilled, and he was as the beasts of the field, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

Q. After the time appointed, did Nebuchadnezzar's reason return?

A. At the end of the time specified, Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes unto heaven,

and his understanding returned, and he blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him that liveth forever, Who doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?

Q. Was his kingdom restored to him?

A. The glory of his kingdom, his honor and brightness, were restored, and his counsellors and lords again sought him, and he was established in excellent majesty.

Q. Did he give the praise to Him to whom it belonged?

A. He exclaimed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride He is able to abase!

Q. Who was the next king of Babylon?

A. Evil Murdock, son of Nebuchadnezzar.

Q. What occurred at a feast given by Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon?

A. Belshazzar made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before them. He sent for the vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, that his friends might drink out of the golden vessels.

Q. Did they drink wine out of these vessels?

A. "They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone."

Q. What occurred at this feast which troubled the king?

A. It is written, that in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

Q. What effect had this upon Belshazzar?

A. His thoughts troubled him, "so that his joints were loose, and his knees smote one against another."

Q. Upon whom did he call in the hour of trouble?

A. The king cried aloud, to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the sooth-sayers.

Q. What did he promise to him who could read the handwriting?

A. He said he should be clothed with scarlet, and have a gold chain about his neck, and he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Q. Could those whom the king called interpret the writing?

A. None of the wise men could read the writing, or give an interpretation to the king.

Q. Did this increase the trouble of the king?

A. He was then *greatly* troubled; and his countenance was so changed that his lords were astonished.

Q. Who came to comfort him?

A. The queen bade him not be troubled, and told him of what Daniel had done for his father, Nebuchadnezzar; and she said, Now, let him be called, and he will show the interpretation.

Q. Was Daniel sent for?

A. Daniel was brought in before the king, who told him that he had heard of his wisdom and understanding, and that he could make interpretations and dissolve doubts; and if he could read the writing and interpret it, he would confer the honor upon him which he had promised to give to any one who could tell him what it foretold.

Q. Did Daniel think he could interpret the writing?

A. He said, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet, I will read

the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

Q. What was the interpretation of the writing on the wall?

A. It was to the effect that the king had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and the kingdom should be divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

Q. To what office did Belshazzar appoint Daniel?

A. He made him third ruler in the kingdom.

Q. What happened the same night?

A. That night Belshazzar was slain.

Q. Who succeeded Belshazzar as king of Babylon?

A. Darius, the Median, ascended the throne.

Q. How many princes did Darius select?

A. He placed over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes; and over these were placed three presidents, of whom Daniel was the first.

Q. Why was Daniel chosen first president?

A. Because he possessed an excellent spirit, and no fault was found in him.

Q. Did the other presidents and princes become jealous of Daniel?

A. They envied Daniel his influence, but

said they could find no fault with him except concerning his God.

Q. What did they devise in order to bring Daniel into displeasure with the king?

A. They proposed to establish a royal statute, that whosoever should ask a petition for thirty days, save of the king, should be cast into the den of lions.

Q. Did the king approve this decree?

A. Yes; he approved the writing and signed the decree.

Q. Did this deter Daniel from performing his daily worship as usual?

A. Daniel went into his house, and the windows being opened in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled three times a day and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as usual.

Q. Were Daniel's enemies waiting to report him to the king?

A. They came near to where Daniel was, and found him praying to his God, and then went to the king and asked him if he had not signed a decree that no man should ask a petition for thirty days, save of him?

Q. What was the king's answer?

A. The king said the thing was true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not.

Q. Did they then complain of Daniel?

A. They said, that Daniel, of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but makes his petition three times a day.

Q. Did the king feel troubled when he heard this?

A. He was displeased and troubled, but still he labored to deliver Daniel till the going down of the sun.

Q. Did those who accused Daniel, seek to establish his guilt?

A. They reminded the king, that, according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, no decree established by the king could be changed.

Q. Did the king then send for Daniel?

A. He had him brought and cast into the den of lions, but said, Thy God whom thou servest continually, will deliver thee.

Q. What next was done?

A. A stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his signet and with the signet of his lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

Q. Did he arise early and go to see about Daniel?

A. He arose early, and went in haste unto

the den, and cried with the voice of lamentation, Daniel, O Daniel! servant of the living God; is thy God whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

Q. Could Daniel answer the king?

A. He said to him, O king, live forever! my God hath sent His angel and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me. Forasmuch as innocency was found in me before Him; and to thee, O king, I have done no hurt.

Q. Was the king pleased to find Daniel unhurt?

A. He was exceedingly glad, and had Daniel removed at once, when he was found to be unhurt, because he believed in his God.

Q. What became of the men who had plotted against Daniel?

A. The king commanded that those who had accused Daniel should be thrown into the den of lions, and we read they were at once destroyed.

Q. Does this account of Daniel convey spiritual instruction

A. There is much in it to teach us the blessedness of loving the Lord our God with our whole heart, mind, and strength, that we may be prepared to serve and obey Him in whatever situation we may be placed.

Q. When Daniel heard of the king's decree, he went into his house; could we apply this figuratively?

A. This house may represent the temple of the Lord within us, into which we may retire in the time of trouble.

Q. It says the windows were open towards Jerusalem; what idea would this convey?

A. Jerusalem is spoken of as a holy city, and the windows being open towards it, conveys an idea of an unobstructed view of the quiet habitation where the throne of heaven is established; and when kneeling or prostrating ourselves in view of this throne, we may pray or supplicate availingly.

Q. Daniel was not hurt by the lions; did he escape for the same reason that his companions Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were preserved from burning?

A. For the very same reason that these, and other faithful servants of the Most High, have been rescued from peril. They "that trust in the Lord shall not be confounded." "The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord is safe."

Q. The accusers, in both instances, were the greater sufferers; is this always the case?

A. When any one attempts to injure the innocent, he is very likely to be the greater

sufferer of the two. To use a common figure, such often "fall into the pit which they have dug for others."

Q. Did king Darius make another decree?

A. Yes; he decreed that in every dominion of his kingdom men should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is a living God, and steadfast forever.

Q. What did the king say of the power of the Great I AM?

A. That "He delivers and rescues; He works signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, even He who delivered Daniel from the den of the lions."

Q. Did Daniel continue to prosper through the reign of Darius?

A. Daniel prospered not only through the reign of Darius the Mede, but lived to see Cyrus the Persian made king.

Q. For what was Daniel remarkable after this?

A. Daniel had a number of visions pertaining to the Messiah and his kingdom, all tending to encourage a faith in the power of Jehovah, and to the end that those who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

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